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CONFIDENTIAL.

(5558.)

F.O.
423

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

SUEZ CANAL COMMISSION.

1887.

20

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Further Correspondence respecting the Suez Canal Commission.

No. 1.

Mr. Macgregor to Sir J. Pauncefote.—(Received January 3.)

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Admiralty, January* 1, 1887.

WITH reference to your letter of the 14th ultimo, in which you ask for an explanation of certain remarks in my letter of the 3rd December respecting the wording of the International Convention to secure the free navigation of the Suez Canal, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to request that you will state to the Earl of Iddesleigh that the opinion expressed in the Admiralty letter of the 3rd ultimo had already been made known to the Foreign Office in the letter from this Department of the 8th June, 1886.

2. My Lords fully appreciate the difficulty of making the rules of action for enforcing the provisions of an International Convention more stringent, and as it appears that Lord Iddesleigh is unable to suggest any way of rendering these rules more effective with regard to insuring a free passage through the Canal, their Lordships consider that the maritime interests of the Empire render it undesirable that Her Majesty's Government should take part in any Convention which would have the effect of prohibiting the naval force of this country being used to secure to our ships free passage through the Suez Canal in time of war.

3. In their Lordships' opinion, the Convention, as at present drafted, does not provide efficient means for insuring the Canal being kept open.

I am, &c.

(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

No. 2.

Viscount Lyons to the Earl of Iddesleigh.—(Received January 6.)

(No. 4.)

My Lord, *Paris, January* 5, 1887.

M. FLOURENS asked me this afternoon whether I had any communication to make to him on the affairs of Egypt. On my answering that I was not charged with any special communication at this moment, he asked me whether I thought I should be able to give him an "answer" in time for the reopening of the French Chambers. I replied that as the reopening would take place in less than a week's time, I hardly thought it possible.

I proceeded to observe that, in order to give Her Majesty's Government the means of expediting the settlement of the Egyptian question, the essential point was that the cordial assistance and co-operation of the other Powers, and especially of France, should be given to their endeavours to put the country into a satisfactory state.

M. Flourens did not mention any particular point on which he desired an "answer" from Her Majesty's Government. Probably, he had in his mind the proposed Suez Canal Convention.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 3.

Sir J. Pauncefote to Mr. Macgregor.

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, January 14, 1887.

Sir,

I LAID before the Earl of Iddesleigh your letter of the 1st instant relative to the objections which are entertained by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to the wording of the proposed International Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

You state that in view of the difficulty of rendering the rules for enforcing the provisions of the Convention more effective, their Lordships consider it undesirable that Her Majesty's Government should take part in any Convention which would have the effect of prohibiting Her Majesty's Government from employing the naval force of this country to secure to British ships free passage through the Suez Canal in time of war.

In reply, I am to request that you will point out to their Lordships that Her Majesty's Government by the Declaration of the 17th March, 1885 (Article III), have pledged themselves to enter into an international arrangement in regard to the Suez Canal on the bases laid down in Earl Granville's Circular of the 3rd January, 1883, and that those bases do not admit of such a provision as is suggested in your letter under reply.

I am to call your attention in connection with this subject to Parliamentary Papers, "Egypt No. 6 (1885)," and "Egypt No. 10 (1885)."

There seems, however, to be no immediate prospect of an agreement as to the terms of the proposed Convention.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 4.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Viscount Lyons.

(No. 201.)

(Extract.)

Foreign Office, March 19, 1887.

M. WADDINGTON observed that his chief object in coming to-day was to say that he was in a position to come to terms about the question of Dongarita; that he had a proposal to make which he believed would be acceptable to Her Majesty's Government, and that he hoped to be able to submit it in writing on Tuesday.

His Excellency added that he was also prepared to make a proposal on the subject of the New Hebrides, but it was his wish that these negotiations should proceed *pari passu* with those on the subject of the Suez Canal, and he thought that the Dongarita question had better take precedence.

His Excellency's manner was very friendly, and indicative of a desire to arrive at an understanding upon all the points specified above.

No. 5.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

(Secret.)

Foreign Office, April 12, 1887.

Sir,

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the proposed International Convention to secure the free navigation of the Suez Canal, I am directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to transmit to you, for the confidential information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a copy of a Report from the Law Officers of the Crown* upon a question which Lord Salisbury thought it desirable to refer to them as to the effect of the stipulation that the Canal should never be subjected to the exercise of the right of blockade.

It will be seen that the Law Officers are of opinion that this provision does not imply any renunciation of the right to seize an enemy's ships anywhere outside the immediate approaches to the Canal which, in their view, would include the Gulf of

[* Law Officers, March 28, 1887.

Suez. But the word "approaches" in Article V of the draft Convention, voted by the majority of the Commission which sat at Paris in 1885, was objected to by the British Delegates as being too vague, and as the Lords Commissioners are aware, the French Government have since assented to the British amendment, whereby the operation of that Article is restricted to a radius of 3 marine miles from the ports of access.

The point raised in the last paragraph of the Report of the Law Officers has, therefore, ceased to have any practical importance.

I am, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 6.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Viscount Lyons.

(No. 296 A.)

Foreign Office, May 15, 1887.

My Lord,

IN a conversation which I had with the French Ambassador a few days ago I showed to his Excellency a project for a Convention, to be proposed by the Sultan to the Powers parties to the Treaty of Berlin, for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

I inclose a copy of this paper herewith, for your Excellency's confidential information.

M. Waddington made some inquiries as to the meaning of the last paragraph of the project, and particularly of the provision "that the Convention shall not interfere with any measures which may be necessary for the defence of Egypt and the security of the Canal."

I said that, in our opinion, the Khedive should be the sole judge of the necessity of taking measures for the security of the Canal, and that those measures should be executed by his own forces and those of his allies.

M. Waddington said that he would forward the paper, with my explanations, to his Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

Inclosure in No. 6.

Project for a Convention for securing the Free Navigation of the Suez Canal.

HIS Imperial Majesty the Sultan will invite the Great Powers parties to the Treaty of Berlin to join in a Convention for better securing the freedom of navigation through the Maritime Canal of Suez.

By such Convention His Imperial Majesty will declare that the Canal shall always be free and open, whether in time of peace or of war, for ships of war and merchant-vessels passing from one sea to the other, without distinction of flag, but on payment of the dues and in conformity with the Regulations actually in force, or which shall from time to time be enacted by [the recognized competent authority]; and the High Contracting Parties will undertake that they will not interfere with the free passage of the Canal, whether in time of peace or of war, and will engage to respect the property and establishments appertaining thereto.

The Convention shall provide that the Canal shall never be subject to the belligerent right of blockade, and that no right of war or act of hostility shall be exercised within the Canal itself, or within a radius of 3 marine miles from the ports of Suez and Port Saïd.

The Convention shall also provide that the Representatives in Egypt of the Signatory Powers shall watch over its execution whenever circumstances shall arise which may threaten the safety or freedom of passage of the Canal; that they shall assemble when convened by one of their body, under an Egyptian President, in order to verify and record the circumstances of danger, and shall inform the Egyptian Government thereof, in order that it may take proper measures to insure the protection and free passage of the Canal; that they shall in any case assemble once a-year, in order to record that the Convention has been duly observed. It shall also be provided that the Convention shall not interfere with any measures which may be necessary for the defence of Egypt and the security of the Canal; and, finally, that the High Contracting Parties shall invite the adhesion of the other Powers to the Convention.

No. 7.

M. Waddington to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received June 4.)

M. le Marquis, *Londres, le 2 Juin*, 1887.

J'AI rendu compte à M. Flourens de la conversation que j'ai eu l'honneur d'avoir avec votre Seigneurie le 11 Mai dernier au sujet du Canal de Suez, et je lui ai fait connaître le sens précis que vous attachez au dernier paragraphe du projet du Convention, que vous m'aviez communiqué.

Vous m'aviez déclaré que, dans la pensée du Gouvernement Anglais, le Khédive devait être seul juge de la nécessité de prendre des mesures pour la sécurité du Canal, et que ces mesures devraient être exécutées par ses propres forces et celles de ses alliés.

Aux yeux de mon Gouvernement, cette interprétation soulève de sérieuses difficultés. En effet, elle est en contradiction avec les clauses précédentes du projet, et elle annulerait en pratique les garanties que le Gouvernement de la République a toujours voulu assurer à la neutralité du Canal. Il n'échappera pas à votre Seigneurie que cette neutralité deviendrait une fiction, si, au cas où il y serait porté atteinte dans des conditions qui restent indéterminées, elle pourrait être défendue non seulement par la Porte et par l'Égypte, mais par des alliés innommés. Il est évident que si l'Égypte et la Porte faisaient intervenir une Puissance quelconque sur le Canal, les autres Puissances ne se sentiraient plus liées par les termes d'une Convention qu'on pourrait regarder comme violée, et qui deviendrait aussitôt lettre-morte. Aucune Puissance Européenne, directement intéressée à la liberté et à la neutralité du Canal, ne consentirait à remettre, en toute circonstance, la défense de cet intérêt aux alliés éventuels que l'Égypte et la Porte pourraient se donner.

L'Angleterre elle-même, à ce qu'il nous semble, pourrait hésiter à accepter pour son propre compte les hasards d'un avenir aussi incertain.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté s'est toujours montré préoccupé de laisser au Khédive et à la Porte suzeraine la liberté de leurs alliances pour la défense du territoire de l'Égypte. De notre côté, nous avons admis la légitimité de cette préoccupation, en dehors du Canal.

Mais la négociation actuelle repose sur le principe que le Canal peut être distingué du reste de l'Égypte, et être garanti par une neutralité spéciale. Il faudra sans doute déterminer la "région du Canal" sur terre, comme elle l'a déjà été du côté de la mer; mais il n'y a là aucune difficulté sérieuse, et j'ai l'honneur d'attirer particulièrement sur ce point l'attention de votre Seigneurie.

Selon nous, le dernier paragraphe du projet devrait être rédigé à peu près en ces termes:—

"Il est attendu que les dispositions ci-dessus relatées ne sauraient préjudicier aux mesures prises par le Gouvernement Khédivial et par la Porte suzeraine pour la défense et la sécurité du territoire Égyptien, en dehors de la zone d'application de la présente Convention."

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) WADDINGTON.

No. 8.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Viscount Lyons.

(No. 340. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, June* 7, 1887.

I INFORMED your Excellency, in my despatch No. 296 A of the 15th ultimo, that I had shown to the French Ambassador a project for a Convention, to be proposed by the Sultan to the Powers parties to the Treaty of Berlin, for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

I now inclose, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a note from M. Waddington,* containing some observations by the French Government on the last paragraph of this draft, and proposing a change in the wording.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

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* No. 7.

No. 9.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir H. Drummond Wolff.

(No. 53. Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 7, 1887.

I TRANSMIT to you herewith, for your confidential information, copies of the communications which have passed between me and the French Ambassador on the project for a Convention to secure the free navigation of the Suez Canal as embodied in Article III of the Convention recently signed by you.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 10.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Viscount Lyons.

(No. 340 A.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, June* 7, 1887.

I HAVE forwarded to your Excellency, in my despatch No. 340 of this day's date, a copy of a note from the French Ambassador at this Court, containing the observations of his Government on a project, which I had shown to his Excellency, for an International Convention to secure the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

M. Waddington stated to me, in conversation to-day, that the point on which the French Government were anxious to come to a decision with Her Majesty's Government, in reference to the Suez Canal, was the question how the Canal and its limits were to be defined?

I declined to attempt any impromptu definition, but said I should like to consult technical as well as legal advisers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 11.

The Marquis of Salisbury to M. Waddington.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Foreign Office, July* 18, 1887.

I HAVE had the honour to receive, and have given my best attention to, your Excellency's note of the 2nd ultimo, containing the observations of your Government upon a project which I had shown to you for an International Convention to secure the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

It was proposed in that project that the Representatives in Egypt of the Signatory Powers should watch over the execution of the Convention whenever circumstances should arise which might threaten the safety or freedom of passage of the Canal; that they should assemble, when convened by one of their body, under an Egyptian President, in order to verify and record the circumstances of danger, and should inform the Egyptian Government thereof, in order that it might take proper measures to insure the protection and free passage of the Canal. Further, that it should be provided that the Convention shall not interfere with any measures which may be necessary for the defence of Egypt and the security of the Canal.

In explanation of this last provision, I stated to your Excellency that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the Khedive should be the sole judge of the necessity of taking measures for the security of the Canal, and that those measures should be executed by his own forces and those of his allies.

The French Government object to this proposal, and wish that the Canal should be distinguished from the rest of Egypt, as being guaranteed by a special neutrality, and your Excellency draws my attention to the necessity for this purpose of defining the "region of the Canal" on land, as is proposed to be done with respect to the limits at sea within which the Convention shall be operative.

It is not, however, explained in your Excellency's note by when and in what manner your Government propose that the measures necessary for the security and

* Nos. 6 and 7.

free navigation of the Canal shall be taken, if not by the Khedive and the Porte or their allies; and the question of the limits within which such measures should be restricted must largely depend upon their nature, and the intended method of procedure.

So long as the force by which the Canal is threatened is one with which the Sultan and the Khedive can deal, the words, "and those of his allies," might be withdrawn from my definition of the means by which the Canal is to be defended. But if your Excellency urges that they should be withdrawn in respect to all contingencies, it must be assumed that you anticipate that an attack superior in force to the defensive power of the territorial Rulers can only come from one of the parties to this Convention, and that in that case the Convention will be broken and annulled, and all parties will resume their natural liberty.

Is that a correct estimate of the view taken by the French Government?

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 12.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Viscount Lyons.

(No. 427.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 18, 1887.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 340 A of the 7th ultimo, I transmit to your Excellency herewith, for your information, a copy of a note which I have addressed to the French Ambassador at this Court on the subject of the proposal to secure the free navigation of the Suez Canal by means of an International Convention.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 13.

M. Waddington to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received July 29.)

M. le Marquis, *Londres, le* 28 *Juillet*, 1887.

PERMETTEZ-MOI, en réponse à la note de votre Seigneurie en date du 18 courant, de bien préciser les différentes éventualités qui peuvent menacer la sécurité du Canal de Suez, et les moyens qui, dans la pensée du Gouvernement de la République, devraient être employés pour leur faire face.

1. La sécurité du Canal peut être compromise par une attaque des tribus ou des populations avoisinantes.

Il est évident que, dans ce cas, les forces militaires ou de police du Khédive suffiraient largement pour rétablir l'ordre.

2. La sécurité du Canal peut être mise en péril par un mouvement insurrectionnel en Égypte, analogue à celui qui a été dirigé par Arabi.

Un mouvement de ce genre ne se fait pas du jour au lendemain: et, en mettant les choses au pire, il s'écoulera toujours un temps assez considérable avant que ce mouvement ne devienne une menace sérieuse pour le Canal. Qu'arrivera-t-il dans ce cas? Les Représentants des Puissances en Égypte se réunissent à la première apparence de danger et le signalent sans délai, à la fois au Gouvernement Égyptien et à leurs Gouvernements respectifs; ils indiquent les mesures qui leur paraissent propres à assurer la liberté du Canal. Cette action des Représentants des Puissances est maintenant admise, bien qu'avec des formules de rédaction un peu différentes, et par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, et par les autres Gouvernements qui ont pris part à la Commission Internationale à Paris.

Si le danger devient sérieux, et "si le Khédive ne dispose pas de moyens suffisants, il devra faire appel à la Sublime Porte, laquelle se concertera avec les autres Puissances Signataires de la Déclaration de Londres du 17 Mars, 1885, en vue d'arrêter d'un commun accord les mesures à prendre pour répondre à cet appel."

Tels sont les termes de l'Article X du Projet de Traité, Article qui a été accepté par toutes les Puissances. Il en résulte que si la sécurité du Canal était menacée par un événement analogue à l'insurrection d'Arabi, les mesures de défense seraient prises

* No. 11.

d'un commun accord par la Porte et les Grandes Puissances. Il me semble que dans sa note du 18 Juillet votre Seigneurie n'a peut-être pas tenu un compte suffisant des garanties internationales édictées dans l'Article X que je viens de rappeler.

3. La liberté et la sécurité du Canal peuvent être menacées par une guerre maritime éclatant entre telles ou telles Puissances Signataires du Traité, et par le fait de l'une d'elles.

Ce dernier cas est celui auquel votre Seigneurie fait allusion à la fin de sa note. Je ne m'explique pas bien comment une pareille éventualité peut préoccuper les Signataires du projet de Traité, dont l'Article Ier porte:—

"Les Hautes Parties Contractantes conviennent de ne porter aucune atteinte au libre usage du Canal en temps de guerre comme en temps de paix."

C'est précisément pour assurer la liberté du Canal en temps de guerre que la Commission Internationale s'est réunie à Paris, et qu'elle a proposé une série d'Articles édictant les précautions minutieuses à prendre dans ce but.

Voilà pourquoi mon Gouvernement n'admet pas que le Sultan ou le Khédive puissent faire appel, en vertu d'un Article du Traité, à des alliés innommés, et dans des conditions indéterminées, pour défendre le Canal contre des dangers que nous considérons comme imaginaires. De deux choses l'une: ou bien le Traité sera exécuté loyalement par toutes les Puissances, et alors il n'y a pas à s'inquiéter du danger qui pourrait menacer le Canal par le fait d'une d'entre elles; ou bien le Traité ne sera pas loyalement exécuté, et alors il n'est qu'une feuille de papier sans valeur.

Ainsi que je l'ai montré plus haut, il n'existe qu'un seul danger sérieux pour la sécurité du Canal, c'est celui qui résulterait d'un état insurrectionnel en Égypte. Or, les Articles IX et X du Projet de Traité stipulent, précisément en vue de ce danger, que les moyens d'y faire face seront déterminés d'un commun accord par la Porte et les Grandes Puissances. Il ne faut introduire aucune stipulation qui puisse affaiblir cet accord, et il saute aux yeux qu'en prévoyant dans le Traité un cas où il serait pourvu à la sécurité du Canal en dehors de cet accord, on introduit dans l'acte un germe de méfiance qui l'affaiblit singulièrement. La liberté et la sécurité du Canal seront infiniment mieux garanties par l'action commune ou l'abstention désintéressée des Puissances, que par l'action indépendante d'une d'entre elles, même si elle agit au nom de la Porte ou du Khédive, et comme leur alliée.

Par toutes ces raisons, mon Gouvernement ne peut admettre que la Porte et le Khédive aient besoin d'alliés spéciaux pour la défense du Canal. En cette matière ils ont pour alliées toutes les Puissances Signataires du Traité sans exception, et il n'y a pas lieu de faire de distinction entre elles.

Dans tout ce qui précède, je n'ai parlé que du Canal ou plutôt de la région du Canal, c'est-à-dire, du Canal avec ses approches maritimes et terrestres. C'est qu'en effet mon Gouvernement estime que le projet de Traité ne s'applique absolument qu'à cette région et non pas à l'Égypte dans son ensemble. Nous n'avons pas à nous occuper aujourd'hui de la défense de l'Égypte, ni des alliances que la Porte ou le Khédive pourront rechercher, à un moment donné, dans ce but. Nous espérons sans doute vivement que la liberté du Canal sera complétée un jour par la neutralité de l'Égypte tout entière; mais pour le moment nous ne poursuivons qu'un but restreint, celui de garantir la sécurité de la région du Canal.

Il y aura donc à définir les limites de cette région du côté de terre, comme cela a déjà été fait du côté de la mer. J'ai appelé l'attention de votre Seigneurie sur ce point dans ma note du 2 Juin dernier. Après les explications que je viens de lui donner au sujet des questions soulevées par sa note du 18 courant, il nous sera peut-être plus facile d'arriver à une définition; et je serais heureux que votre Seigneurie voulût bien me communiquer ses vues à ce sujet.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) WADDINGTON.

No. 14.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 490.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 19, 1887.

THE French Ambassador called this afternoon.

His Excellency spoke of the communication which he had just received from me upon the subject of the Suez Canal, of which a copy was forwarded to you in my

despatch No. 489 of to-day's date, and observed that he thought that the proposal contained in it seemed likely to furnish a basis for an agreement.

I reminded his Excellency of the pending difficulties in regard to the New Hebrides, and warned him that, unless a settlement was arrived at during the autumn, public opinion in England would be seriously disquieted. He expressed his belief that the question would be settled in the autumn.

I gathered from M. Waddington's language that the recent anti-English action of the French Government was opposed to the advice which he had given.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 15.

The Marquis of Salisbury to M. Waddington.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Foreign Office, August* 19, 1887.

IN answering your Excellency's letter of the 28th ultimo, respecting the Suez Canal Convention, I would recall to your mind that the discussions on which we are engaged have arisen on the form to be given to the closing sentences of the draft Convention which I had the honour to submit to you on the 15th May.

In my draft the last sentence ran: "It shall also be provided that the Convention shall not interfere with any measures which may be necessary for the defence of Egypt and the security of the Canal."

In answer to a question from you I stated our opinion that it was for the Khedive to judge of the measures necessary for assuring that security, and to decide whether the assistance of allies was necessary or not. You have taken a very strong objection to the admission that such a resource could under any circumstances be necessary, and you have dwelt in detail on the sufficiency of the defence provided in the proposed Convention against any possible dangers.

These dangers may practically be divided into those which may arise from local disturbances, and any attack which might proceed from one of the Great European Powers who are to be the Signatories to this Convention.

In regard to this latter danger, far the more formidable of the two, I am glad to note that the course of discussion has brought us into accord. You admit in your letter under reply that, in such a case, the Convention would be "qu'une feuille de papier sans valeur." This view does not perceptibly differ from that which I suggested in my letter of the 18th ultimo, when I said that in the case supposed "the Convention would be broken and annulled, and all parties would resume their natural liberty." The question whether the Khedive should appeal to his allies might very probably then arise; but the decision of it could not be hampered by the stipulations of a Convention which would have ceased to exist. We may, therefore, confine our attention to the other possible danger, that which would arise from local disturbance.

I frankly confess that I have very little faith in the safeguard which it is proposed to supply by the Treaty, in case the Khedive should be unable to deal with the emergency by his own unassisted forces. It is proposed that he should appeal to the Sublime Porte, which will consult with the six other Signatory Powers in order to determine by common accord upon the measures to be taken. Whatever destructive end an insurrectionary leader might have in view, he would have enjoyed more than abundant time to accomplish it before the defensive machinery which depends upon the accord between the Porte and the Six Powers could be brought into operation.

At the same time, I recognize the difficulty, on which your Excellency lays stress, of assigning to any single Power the duty of providing for the security of the Canal, of which the international character has been so solemnly affirmed.

I think also it must be admitted that, with regard to the Canal itself, the danger against which precautions are to be taken is not of a very formidable kind. In any insurrectionary movement the Canal would remain, as before, open to all the Powers; and though the prohibition to exercise in it any right of war might prevent them from defending the Canal from injury, it would leave them at full liberty to protect any vessels of their own which might pass through it.

It is obvious, however, that this question links itself closely with the definition of that which your Excellency has designated as the region of the Canal, a definition which, in the letter under reply, you invite me to discuss.

No. 14*.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 480.) *Foreign Office, August* 15, 1887.

Sir,

THE French Ambassador discussed with me to-day the question of the Suez Canal Convention. He pressed for an answer to his note of the 28th July, and urged his view that the defence of the Canal should be left to the Sultan and the Khedive, and also that the definition of the Canal should include a band of territory on either side.

I pointed out to his Excellency that this latter stipulation would cause some embarrassment, because the essence of the proposed Convention was to declare that any one might pass through the Canal at any time, and that if a band of territory were included in the Canal, there would be nothing to prevent the passage of armies on both sides of it.

I promised his Excellency, however, to send an answer to his note, and then reminded him of the very vexatious delays which hindered the conclusion of the New Hebrides negotiations.

M. Waddington's answer was not very distinct, but appeared to imply that the French looked on the signature of the Canal Convention as a matter affecting their dignity; and that a doubt whether we were in earnest in the negotiation was the cause of the deliberation with which the New Hebrides discussion was being pursued.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

The restriction in question assumes a very different aspect if we interpret the word "Canal," as your Excellency seems inclined to do, to mean not only the portion of land covered by water, but a border of dry land upon each side. If there is to be on each side of the Canal a space of greater or less width to which the stipulations we are now considering are to apply, very serious difficulties will arise.

These spaces must be subject to a kind of neutralization fundamentally different from that which is to be provided for the real Canal. If the formula is applied to them that they are to be "open to all Powers at all times," it is obvious that they will become rather common ground than neutral territory. Any Power will be at liberty to place whatever amount of military force it pleases upon them at any time. On the other hand, if neutralization in its more ordinary sense is applied to them, and, instead of any Power at any time being allowed to pass through them, it is provided that no Power at any time shall do so, it is obvious that a band of territory will be marked out within the dominions of the Sultan which he will not be at liberty to enter, even at the request of the Khedive, but which will be singularly at the mercy of a local insurrectionary movement, if any such should arise. In fact, if such a stretch of land should be closed to the Sovereign of the territory in which it is placed, it will be in a position for which no precedent in international law or practice can be found. It will be part of the Ottoman Empire under the sanction of the Treaty of Paris; but the Sultan will be forbidden to exercise on it any rights of sovereignty or suzerainty. It cannot be expected that the Porte will accept such a proposal.

It is not necessary for me to pursue this subject further, but it is evident that a diplomatic attempt so entirely novel as that of establishing a waterway invariably open to all nations, between two strips of land invariably closed even to the Sovereign of the soil and the ultimate guardian of order, will give rise to many anomalies, and can scarcely fail to be the source of much dispute.

I am bound to add that I do not find in Lord Granville's original Circular of the 3rd January, 1883, or in the Declaration of the 17th March, 1885, signed by your Excellency and him, which was based upon that Circular, any suggestion committing either of the Contracting Parties to the opinion that anything is included in the Canal except the land that is covered by water.

I am disposed to suggest to your Excellency, as a means of bringing to an end this controversy between us, that the plan of defence which you have suggested, namely, by the Khedive in the first instance, and by the Seven Powers in the second, should be adopted for the Canal proper; but that, in doing so, we should abandon all attempt to include in the definition of the Canal any land that is not covered by water.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 16.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. J. G. Kennedy.

(No. 248. Ext. 71.)
(Extract.)

Foreign Office, August 19, 1887.

M. CATALANI then inquired how the negotiations between England and France in regard to the Suez Canal were progressing.

I informed him that the proposals which we had made to France were embodied in Article III of the Convention concluded by Sir H. Drummond Wolff with the Porte.

No. 17.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. J. G. Kennedy.

(No. 253.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, August 25, 1887.

THE Italian Chargé d'Affaires spoke to me to-day of the Agreement regarding the Suez Canal, which he understood we were about to sign with France, Signor Crispi having instructed him to say that Italy, as a Mediterranean Power, would wish to be a party to it.

I explained to M. Catalani the nature of our *pourparlers* with France, which were

the outcome of the Paris Commission of 1885, and said that, as soon as the differences between the two Governments on this subject were removed, it would again come under international consideration. No Agreement, I assured him, would be signed with France respecting the Canal without Signor Crispi's knowledge.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 18.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 161 A.)

Foreign Office, August 25, 1887.

Sir,

THE Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires inquired this afternoon whether it was true that Her Majesty's Government were likely to come to a speedy understanding with that of France respecting the Suez Canal.

He was informed that the difference between the two Governments on this question was, and had for some time been, restricted within limits which made it possible that an understanding might at any time be arrived at; but that it had been so long delayed, notwithstanding the apparently slight amount of divergence, that it was difficult to form any distinct anticipations of a settlement.

The only material point left open was the question whether, in case of need, the Khedive should be at liberty to apply to any one Power for assistance in the defence of the Canal, as, if he were compelled to wait for joint European action, the opportunity might be lost.

Baron de Biegeleben said that he did not wish to ask for any confidences, but that if the matter were at any time approaching settlement, his Government would be glad to be informed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 19.

War Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 26.)

War Office, August 25, 1887.

Sir,

WITH reference to your letter of the 6th instant, inclosing a copy of a letter from M. Waddington, dated the 28th July last, relative to the neutralization of the Suez Canal, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Stanhope to transmit herewith, to be laid before Lord Salisbury, a Memorandum by Major-General Brackenbury, Deputy Adjutant-General, Intelligence Branch, pointing out that this country has nothing to gain and something to lose by a Convention granting universal free passage of the Canal in time of war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RALPH THOMPSON.

Inclosure in No. 19.

Memorandum.

(Secret.)

IN the event of war with France alone, or with France in combination with any other Power, it is of the utmost importance to us to close the Suez Canal, in order to force all commerce for the East to take the same route that our own commerce must follow, and on which we are supreme, round the Cape of Good Hope; and there is no doubt that, in the event of war with France, our navy would find means of blocking effectually, and for a considerable period of time, the passage of the Suez Canal.

2. On the other hand, in the event of war with Russia alone, it is of the utmost importance to us to keep the Suez Canal open for our vessels of war and transports. Karáchi must be our maritime base for any operations in or through Biluchistan; and in the event of a railway being constructed leading inland from the Persian Gulf (towards which the efforts of the Foreign Office are now being directed), the importance

of the Suez Canal route will, in case of war with Russia, be greatly increased. Russia knows this as well as we do, and, unless her naval officers are much less enterprising than our own, they will, on or even before the declaration of war, block the Canal so as to make its passage impossible to us.

3. The above sums up the whole question as to the value of the Suez Canal to us in the event of war; and, inasmuch as any future war between this country and either France or Russia must be a great and probably a long struggle, in which every possible means of injuring the enemy will be adopted, it appears certain that in the first case we, and in the second case Russia, will take means to close the passage of the Suez Canal, no matter what Treaties as to its neutralization or free navigation may exist at the time of war being declared; but such means will be taken secretly, and the authorship of the act will never be admitted.

4. Thus it would appear that this country has nothing to gain from a Convention granting universal free passage of the Suez Canal in time of war; that such a Convention would, when war arises, not be worth the paper it is written on, unless this country should be so foolish as to forego, in case of war with France, the immense advantage to our commerce which would be gained by blocking the Canal.

5. Further, if such a Treaty be made and be respected by us, it will be necessary to strengthen Aden and keep such a naval force there as will prevent a French fleet, which might enter the Red Sea from the Mediterranean, obtaining access to the Indian Ocean.

(Signed) HENRY BRACKENBURY,
Major-General, D.A.G.

Intelligence Branch, War Office, August 10, 1887.

No. 20.

M. Waddington to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received September 5.)

Londres, le 3 *Septembre*, 1887.

M. le Marquis,

PAR votre note du 19 Août vous avez bien voulu proposer, dans le but de hâter la conclusion de la longue négociation entre nos deux Gouvernements relative au Canal de Suez, l'arrangement suivant:—

La procédure que j'ai suggérée dans ma note du 28 Juillet pour pourvoir à la sécurité et à la défense du Canal, à savoir: par le Khédive en premier lieu, et par les sept Puissances Signataires en second lieu, serait acceptée par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine en ce qui touche le Canal proprement dit.

D'autre part, il ne serait plus question de comprendre dans la définition du Canal une zone latérale non recouverte par les eaux.

Votre Seigneurie reconnaît, en outre, que l'ensemble des garanties stipulées dans le Projet de Convention rend inutile le recours du Khédive ou du Sultan à des alliés, pour la défense du droit international de libre passage perpétuel par le Canal.

En prenant acte des déclarations de votre Seigneurie sur ces points importants, M. Flourens me charge de lui exprimer la satisfaction que lui fait éprouver la conviction d'arriver promptement à un accord sur toutes les questions visées dans le Projet de Convention.

En effet, la renonciation du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine à l'idée de faire intervenir une tierce Puissance pour la défense du Canal placé sous la garantie collective de l'Europe, nous paraît rendre moins nécessaire la délimitation géographique de la région du Canal—délimitation dont l'idée s'était naturellement produite au cours de la discussion et qui, dans notre pensée, avait surtout pour objet de déterminer sur chacune des deux rives une certaine zone dans laquelle le Gouvernement Khédivial et la Porte Suzeraine, contrairement aux principes applicables jusqu'à nouvel ordre au reste de l'Égypte, renonceraient à opérer militairement avec des alliés. Nous renonçons donc à insister sur la délimitation précise de la zone du Canal dont il a été question.

Il n'est jamais entré dans nos vues, votre Seigneurie s'en convaincra aisément en se faisant représenter les pièces de la négociation, que les rives du Canal puissent en aucun cas être considérées comme un "territoire commun ouvert à tous," où une Puissance étrangère quelconque aurait le droit de débarquer des troupes ou de faire transiter une force armée. Si nous avons jugé qu'il y aurait un intérêt général à les considérer comme une dépendance de la ligne d'eau, c'est au point de vue seulement de l'obligation que le Khédive et la Porte d'abord, et les Puissances ensuite, auraient

d'y faire respecter, dans les formes prévues par la Convention, les garanties jugées nécessaires au libre passage par le Canal proprement dit. Cette manière d'envisager la question n'implique en aucune façon que l'accès de la zone latérale doive être interdit au Souverain et au Suzerain territorial. Ce qui importe, et ce point, je l'espère, ne sera pas contesté par votre Seigneurie, c'est que les dispositions internationales prises pour assurer la libre circulation dans le lit même du Canal aient, en vertu du Traité, l'efficacité suffisante pour empêcher que le territoire avoisinant puisse être utilisé dans le but de rendre illusoires les garanties stipulées pour la partie recouverte par les eaux.

Si votre Seigneurie admet ce principe, elle jugera sans doute, comme nous, préférable de l'énoncer dans une formule générale, plutôt que d'en restreindre l'application à une zone kilométrique. Ce but, croyons-nous, pourrait être atteint au moyen de la rédaction suivante de l'Article IX [?] :—

"Les Représentants en Égypte des Puissances Signataires du présent Traité seront chargés de veiller à son exécution. En toute circonstance qui menacerait la sécurité ou le libre passage du Canal, ils se réuniront sur la convocation d'un d'entre eux et sous la présidence de leur Doyen, pour procéder aux constatations nécessaires. Ils feront connaître au Gouvernement Khédivial le danger qu'ils auront reconnu, afin que celui-ci prenne les mesures propres à assurer la protection et le libre usage du Canal. Ils réclameront notamment la suppression de tout ouvrage ou la dispersion de tout rassemblement qui, sur l'une ou l'autre rive du Canal, pourrait avoir pour but ou pour effet de porter atteinte à la liberté et à l'entière sécurité de la navigation."

J'ai la conviction que cette nouvelle rédaction donne satisfaction à tous les intérêts internationaux en jeu, et j'espère qu'elle obtiendra l'approbation de votre Seigneurie.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) WADDINGTON.

No. 21.

Foreign Office to War Office.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 9, 1887.

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, forwarding a Memorandum by Major-General Brackenbury, on the relative advantages and disadvantages of a Convention to secure the free passage of the Suez Canal.

Lord Salisbury desires to return his thanks to Mr. Secretary Stanhope for the communication of this able paper. His Lordship fears, however, that it would be useless now to discuss the question of the expediency of concluding such a Convention, as it will be seen by the inclosed Memorandum that a formal engagement was given by Earl Granville in the Declaration of the 17th March, 1885, that Her Majesty's Government would take part with the other Great Powers and the Porte in drawing up an International Act, and in recommending it to the acceptance of other Governments.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 22.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. J. G. Kennedy.

(No. 286. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 20, 1887.

THE Italian Chargé d'Affaires has called at this Office on more than one occasion and expressed the anxiety of M. Crispi to be informed of the present state of the negotiations between this country and France for the conclusion of an International Act to secure the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

I gathered from M. Catalani's communications that the chief object of M. Crispi's anxiety was that the Italian Government should be given an opportunity either of becoming a party to the arrangement, or of signing at the same time a similar Convention on their own behalf.

I have caused M. Catalani to be informed in strict confidence of the present state

of the negotiations with the French Government on the subject in a Memorandum, of which a copy is inclosed herewith.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

Inclosure in No. 22.

Memorandum for M. Catalani.

(Very Confidential.)

THE proposal made by Lord Salisbury to M. Waddington was for a Convention respecting the Suez Canal in the terms described in Article III of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Convention.

The French Government objected to the last paragraph of the proposal, which is as follows :—

"It shall also be provided that the Convention shall not interfere with any measures which may be necessary for the defence of Egypt and the security of the Canal."

They wished the sentence to run as follows :—

"Il est entendu que les dispositions ci-dessus relatées ne sauraient préjudicier aux mesures prises par le Gouvernement Khédivial et par la Porte Suzeraine pour la défense et la sécurité du territoire Égyptien, *en dehors de la zone d'application de la présente Convention.*"

As a necessary corollary of this wording, they wished for a definition of the "region of the Canal" by land as well as by sea.

A correspondence ensued as to the expediency of this wording, and as to whether, in case the Porte and the Khedive should be unequal to the task of protecting the Canal, they should have the right of appealing to any one Power for assistance, or should only appeal for the assistance of all the Powers conjointly.

M. Waddington argued that recourse should be had to the method prescribed in Article X of the draft Treaty recommended by the International Commission at Paris, viz. :—

"Si le Khédive ne dispose pas de moyens suffisants, il devra faire appel à la Sublime Porte, laquelle se concertera avec les autres Puissances Signataires de la Déclaration de Londres du 17 Mars, 1885, en vue d'arrêter d'un commun accord les mesures à prendre pour répondre à cet appel."

Lord Salisbury in his last note expressed some doubt as to the efficacy of this course of procedure against an insurrectionary leader, but admitted that in that case the danger to the Canal itself would not be of a very formidable kind. He noted with satisfaction that the French Government appeared to agree with him that in case any one of the Powers parties to the Convention should threaten the Canal, the Convention would thereby be annulled, and all parties would resume their freedom of action.

He pointed out that there were objections to defining the Canal so as to include a border of land on either side, as in that case any Power would be at liberty to land and march troops within these limits, or, if this were forbidden, the Sultan and the Khedive would be equally prohibited from doing so.

Finally, he suggested that the plan of defence proposed by M. Waddington might be adopted for the Canal, provided there were no attempt at a definition of the Canal so as to include any land not covered by water.

In reply, M. Waddington states that what the French Government think important is that the international arrangements for the freedom of navigation should be sufficient to prevent the neighbouring territory from being made use of to defeat the objects of the Convention. With this object his Excellency proposes the following wording :—

"Les Représentants en Égypte des Puissances Signataires du présent Traité seront chargés de veiller à son exécution en toute circonstance qui menacerait la sécurité ou le libre passage du Canal; ils se réuniront sur la convocation d'un d'entre eux et sous la présidence de leur doyen, pour procéder aux constatations nécessaires. Ils feront connaître au Gouvernement Khédivial le danger qu'ils auront reconnu afin qui celui-ci prenne les mesures propres à assurer la protection et le libre usage du Canal. Ils réclameront notamment la suppression de tout ouvrage ou la dispersion de tout

rassemblement qui, sur l'une ou l'autre rive du Canal, pourrait avoir pour but ou pour effet de porter atteinte à la liberté et à l'entière sécurité de la navigation."

This proposal is now under consideration.

Foreign Office, September 13, 1887.

No. 23.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 558. Very Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 23, 1887.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 490 of the 19th ultimo, I transmit to you herewith a copy of a further note which I have received from the French Ambassador with regard to the project for an International Act to secure the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

As in this note M. Waddington speaks of a fresh wording of Article IX, it is not quite clear whether the French Government have in view a return to the draft Convention drawn up by the International Commission at Paris in 1885, or merely propose an addition to the shorter project which I communicated to M. Waddington in May last.

I assume, however, that the latter is their intention, and I have privately communicated to Count d'Aubigny, who is in charge of the Embassy in M. Waddington's absence, a draft of Convention, such as I understand the French Government to be willing to accept, with the request that he will ascertain whether it is in the form which they desire.

In the event of an affirmative answer, I have stated that Her Majesty's Government will be ready to consider whether they can also accept it.

I inclose herewith a copy of this draft for your own information only.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Draft Convention.

LES Gouvernements de , [voulant compléter par un Acte Conventionnel le régime sous lequel la navigation par le Canal Maritime de Suez a été placée par le Firman de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, sanctionnant les Concessions de Son Altesse le Khédive, ont nommé pour leurs Plénipotentiaires, savoir:

Lesquels, s'étant communiqué leurs pleins pouvoirs respectifs, trouvés en bonne et due forme, sont convenus des Articles suivants:—

I. Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et Son Altesse le Khédive déclarent que le Canal Maritime de Suez sera toujours libre et ouvert, en temps de guerre comme en temps de paix, à tout navire de commerce ou de guerre traversant d'une mer à l'autre, sans distinction de pavillon, moyennant le payement des droits et l'exécution des règlements en vigueur.

II. Les Hautes Parties Contractantes conviennent de ne porter aucune atteinte au libre passage du Canal, en temps de guerre comme en temps de paix, et s'engagent à respecter son matériel et ses établissements. Par conséquent, le Canal ne sera jamais assujetti au droit de blocus; et aucun droit de guerre ou aucun acte d'hostilité ne pourra être exercé dans le Canal et dans un rayon de 3 milles marins de ses ports d'accès.

III. Les Représentants en Égypte des Puissances Signataires du présent Traité seront chargés de veiller à son exécution. En toute circonstance qui menacerait la sécurité ou le libre passage du Canal, ils se réuniront sur la convocation d'un d'entre eux, et sous la présidence de leur Doyen, pour procéder aux constatations nécessaires.

Ils feront connaître au Gouvernement Khédivial le danger qu'ils auront reconnu, afin que celui-ci prenne les mesures propres à assurer la protection et le libre usage du Canal. Ils réclameront notamment la suppression de tout ouvrage ou la dispersion de tout rassemblement qui, sur l'une ou l'autre rive du Canal, pourrait avoir pour but ou pour effet de porter atteinte à la liberté et à l'entière sécurité de la navigation.

IV. Le Gouvernement Égyptien prendra, dans la limite de ses pouvoirs, tels qu'ils résultent des Firmans, les mesures nécessaires pour faire respecter l'exécution du présent Acte.

Dans le cas où le Gouvernement Égyptien ne disposerait pas de moyens suffisants, il devra faire appel à la Sublime Porte, laquelle se concertera avec les autres Puissances Signataires de la Déclaration de Londres du 17 Mars, 1885, en vue d'arrêter d'un commun accord les mesures à prendre pour répondre à cet appel.

V. Le présent Acte ne portera aucune atteinte aux droits de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et de Son Altesse le Khédive, en dehors des obligations qui en résultent expressément, ni aux mesures que Sa Majesté Impériale ou Son Altesse seraient dans la nécessité de prendre pour assurer la défense de l'Égypte et le maintien de l'ordre public.

VI. Les Hautes Parties Contractantes s'engagent à porter le présent Acte à la connaissance des autres États en les invitant à y accéder.

No. 24.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 561 A. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 26, 1887.

THE French Chargé d'Affaires called at the Foreign Office this afternoon, and said that he had heard from M. Waddington on the subject of the draft Convention for the free navigation of the Suez Canal, which I had privately communicated to M. d'Aubigny, and of which a copy was inclosed in my despatch No. 558 of the 23rd instant.

He said that M. Waddington admitted that the draft correctly embodies the different points on which an accord had been arrived at in the recent discussions, but that his Excellency could not recommend its acceptance in its present form, and would prefer to prepare another draft which would approach more nearly to the "rédaction primitive," that is to say, to the Project of Convention drawn up by the International Commission at Paris. M. Waddington hoped to be able to communicate his draft to me at the beginning of next month.

It is to be feared that an attempt to go beyond the bases communicated to M. Waddington on the 15th May last, by adding fresh provisions to the draft now under consideration, or by reverting to the Paris draft, may have the effect of reopening the whole question, but I await the communication of M. Waddington's proposals before making any further observations.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 25.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. Stuart.

(No. 50. Secret.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 6, 1887.

I UNDERSTAND that the Netherlands Government continue to take a great interest in the question of securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal by an International Act, and are desirous of obtaining information as to what has recently passed on the subject between Her Majesty's Government and that of France.

I inclose herewith a Memorandum giving a brief account of the discussions I have had with the French Ambassador and of the present state of the negotiation.* You are at liberty to communicate the substance of this paper verbally, and in strict confidence, to the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs, but you should not give him a copy of it.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

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* Inclosure in No. 22.

No. 26.

Sir W. Stuart to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 87. Secret.)

My Lord,

The Hague, October 8, 1887.

I CALLED on M. de Karnebeek yesterday afternoon, and read to him in strict confidence the Memorandum which your Lordship inclosed to me in your despatch No. 50, Secret, of the 6th instant, giving a brief account of the present state of the negotiations between Her Majesty's Government and that of France upon the question of securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal by an International Act.

His Excellency begged me to convey his best thanks to your Lordship for this communication.

In the course of the conversation which ensued, M. de Karnebeek observed that the composition of the International Commission for securing the freedom of the Canal was the point in the question which was of special importance to the Netherlands; that the Netherlands Government had no pretension to interfere in the internal affairs of Egypt, but that he thought your Lordship would admit that, as being the Power which next to Great Britain and France had the greatest stake and interest in the freedom of the Canal, both commercially in respect of the amount of her shipping passing through that waterway, and politically in respect of her large colonial possessions in the East, it was not unreasonable that the Netherlands should desire to be represented on the Commission.

From what I had read to him, however, considered in connection with the third Article of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Convention, his Excellency feared that it might be intended that the Commission should be exclusively composed of Representatives of the Powers parties to the Treaty of Berlin, in which case the Representative of the Netherlands would be excluded from it, although the Netherlands had been invited, together with Spain, to take part in the Conferences of Paris in 1885 upon the Suez Canal question, and would have been represented upon the Commission which it was then proposed to create for the purpose now in view.

Whilst disclaiming any wish to raise a difficulty in the matter, M. de Karnebeek urgently requested me to represent his views upon it to your Lordship's friendly consideration, in the hope that you would be so good as to provide for the inclusion of the Netherlands upon the Commission in the course of the further negotiations upon the Canal question.

He stated also that at the Paris Conferences, he believed, the Netherlands Representative had even been a member of the Commission to which the task of drawing up the proposed Convention upon the Suez Canal question had been intrusted, and that the Netherlands Government would always make a point of having an able and intelligent Representative in Egypt, as the post was one of such great importance to this country.

I was unable to inform M. de Karnebeek whether it was intended or not that the Netherlands should be represented upon the Commission; but, whilst readily undertaking to recommend his request upon the subject to your Lordship, I thought it as well to notice to him that, as far as could be inferred from the information which I had just communicated to him, it did not appear to be intended that even Great Britain, in spite of her preponderating interests in the Canal and in Egypt, should be represented upon the Commission to a greater extent than any of the other Powers whose Representatives would be members of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 27.

War Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 12.)

(Secret.)

Sir,

War Office, October 10, 1887.

WITH reference to your letter of the 17th ultimo, forwarding copies of a letter from M. Waddington, dated the 3rd September, 1887, respecting the Suez Canal, I am directed by the Secretary of State for War to inclose herewith a Memorandum prepared in the Intelligence Branch, and to request that you will be good enough to lay it before the Secretary of State.

Mr. Stanhope desires me to add that, in the opinion of his military advisers, it is above all things important that we should reserve to ourselves the right of sending troops and military stores by rail through Egypt whenever we may require to do so, and should sign no Convention that precludes us from doing this at all times and under all circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RALPH THOMPSON.

Inclosure in No. 27.

Memorandum on the Despatch from M. Waddington to Lord Salisbury, dated London, September 3, 1887.

(Confidential.)

IN General Brackenbury's Secret Memorandum of the 17th May, 1887, it is shown how certain it is that, in case of war with either France or Russia, the Canal will be blocked, and that this could be done secretly and be disavowed, so that no Great Power could be accused of having broken the Convention.

It is also explained that, in case of war with Russia, it will be important for us, the Canal being blocked, to have the power of transporting troops overland across Egypt, but such a movement of troops could not take place without an infraction of any Convention neutralizing the whole of Egypt.

From M. Waddington's despatch of the 2nd June, 1887, it is apparent that the French Government made no objection to the movements of an ally of Egypt outside of a certain zone near the Canal; and it would have been to our advantage to have agreed to the definition of a zone within which alone the neutralization should be applied.

By objecting, however, to this zone, an opportunity has now been given to M. Waddington for proposing the extension of the powers of the Neutralization Committee to the whole of Egypt.

Thus, in case of a war between England and Russia, any attempt on our part to transport troops across Egypt would be noted as a danger to the Canal.

The original French proposal appears therefore preferable to this.

(Signed) G. A. K. WISELY,
Captain, Royal Engineers.

Intelligence Branch, War Office, September 27, 1887.

No. 28.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. Stuart.

(No. 52. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 20, 1887.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 87, Secret, of the 8th instant, in which you inform me of the wish expressed to you by M. de Karnebeek, that the Netherlands Government should be represented on any future Commission for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

I have to request that you will inform M. de Karnebeek that Her Majesty's Government will not fail to bear in mind the wishes of the Netherlands Government in the matter, but that it would, in their opinion, be premature to discuss the point at the present stage of the negotiations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 29.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 600.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 21, 1887.

MORE than two years have elapsed since the last meeting of the Commission appointed by the Declaration of London of March 1885 to prepare a Treaty for guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal by all Powers at all times. It separated on the 13th June, 1885, apparently in consequence of the change of Government in

England, without coming to any conclusion. Since that time the French Ambassador has repeatedly urged upon Her Majesty's Government the importance of resuming the discussion, with a view to bringing the negotiations to a conclusion. On the 13th January, 1886, M. Waddington informed me that "the French Government had consulted the other Powers as to the resumption of negotiations on the subject of the Suez Canal, with the result that these Powers expressed their readiness to concur in any solution of the questions left in suspense at the time of the sittings of the late Conference in Paris, which might be acceptable both to Great Britain and France." I deprecated a renewal of the discussion at that moment on account of the uncertain condition of political affairs in England. Shortly after the change of Ministry, M. Waddington urged a resumption of the negotiations upon Lord Rosebery, but was met again with the observation that the moment was not favourable, though Lord Rosebery expressed the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government to be in harmony with that of France on this important question. Considerable discussion took place upon the matter in the time of Lord Iddesleigh, and it has been the subject of several communications between M. Waddington and myself. The French Government are now pressing very earnestly upon us that it is of great importance that this long negotiation should now, if possible, be brought to a close. We are not in a position to dispute this allegation. We have declared, in the most formal manner possible, first in conjunction with the French Government, and afterwards with the other Great Powers in the Declaration of London of the 17th March, 1885, that "we have agreed to recognize the urgent necessity for negotiating with the object of sanctioning by a Conventional Act the establishment of a definitive Regulation destined to guarantee at all times and for all Powers the freedom of the Canal." As a matter of good faith, therefore, we are under an obligation to spare no effort to arrive at an agreement upon the terms of a Conventional Act which shall satisfy the above Declaration, consistently with the duties and interests to which Her Majesty's Government are bound to have regard.

It is possible that the French Republic may insist upon conditions to which the objections in our judgment are insuperable. But the tone of their communications appears to me to indicate a disposition to meet in a considerable degree the objections of detail raised by the British Delegates at Paris. In view, therefore, of the policy to which Her Majesty's Government are pledged by the Declaration of London, it appears to me that it is right to examine again whether the differences on questions of substance, which made the negotiations of 1885 unfruitful, are such as to make an agreement definitively hopeless.

I inclose proposals for a Convention, following in their form and arrangement the draft which was under discussion in 1885, and containing the stipulations on which, in the judgment of Her Majesty's Government, the two Governments may properly come to an agreement. On some of the points which two years ago they were unable to concede, they have offered alternative suggestions by which the difficulty may be turned; on others they have good ground for hoping that the Government of the Republic will be disposed not to insist.

It must be borne in mind that the two Governments were requested by the other Powers represented in the International Commission to enter upon special negotiations, and to come, if possible, to a preliminary understanding, in order to facilitate a European agreement. But no instrument to which they set their signatures can have any practical value until it has received the assent of the Suzerain and of the other Powers concerned.

In laying this proposal before M. Flourens, it is my duty to renew the words of a reservation made, without opposition on any side, by Sir Julian Pauncefote at the close of the sittings of the Commission of 1885. It was to the following effect:—

"Les Délégués de la Grande-Bretagne, en présentant ce texte de Traité comme le régime définitif destiné à garantir le libre usage du Canal de Suez, pensent qu'il est de leur devoir de formuler une réserve générale quant à l'application de ces dispositions en tant qu'elles ne seraient pas compatibles avec l'état transitoire et exceptionnel où se trouve actuellement l'Égypte, et qu'elles pourraient entraver la liberté d'action de leur Gouvernement pendant la période de l'occupation de l'Égypte par les forces de Sa Majesté Britannique."

I have, in conclusion, to request that you will give to M. Flourens a copy of this despatch, together with the draft Convention which it incloses.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Draft of Suez Canal Convention.

LES Gouvernements de , voulant consacrer, par un Acte Conventionnel, l'établissement d'un régime définitif destiné à garantir, en tous temps et à toutes les Puissances, le libre usage du Canal Maritime de Suez, et compléter ainsi le régime sous lequel la navigation par ce Canal a été placée par le Firman de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, en date du 22 Février, 1866 (2 Zilkadé, 1282), sanctionnant les concessions de Son Altesse le Khédive, ont nommé pour leurs Plénipotentiaires, savoir:

Lesquels, s'étant communiqué leurs pleins-pouvoirs respectifs, trouvés en bonne et due forme, sont convenus des Articles suivants:—

ARTICLE I.

Le Canal Maritime de Suez sera toujours libre et ouvert, en temps de guerre comme en temps de paix, à tout navire de commerce ou de guerre, sans distinction de pavillon.

En conséquence, les Hautes Parties Contractantes conviennent de ne porter aucune atteinte au libre usage du Canal, en temps de guerre comme en temps de paix.

Le Canal ne sera jamais assujetti à l'exercice du droit de blocus.

ARTICLE II.

Les Hautes Parties Contractantes, reconnaissant que le Canal d'Eau-Douce est indispensable au Canal Maritime, prennent acte des engagements de Son Altesse le Khédive envers la Compagnie Universelle du Canal de Suez en ce qui concerne le Canal d'Eau-Douce.

Elles s'engagent à ne porter aucune atteinte à la sécurité de ce Canal et de ses dérivations, dont le fonctionnement ne pourra être l'objet d'aucune tentative d'obstruction.

ARTICLE III.

Les Hautes Parties Contractantes s'engagent de même à respecter le matériel, les établissements, constructions, et travaux du Canal Maritime et du Canal d'Eau-Douce.

ARTICLE IV.

Le Canal Maritime restant ouvert en temps de guerre comme passage libre, même aux navires de guerre des belligérants aux termes de l'Article I du présent Traité, les Hautes Parties Contractantes conviennent qu'aucun droit de guerre, aucun acte d'hostilité ou aucun acte ayant pour but d'entraver la libre navigation du Canal ne pourra être exercé dans le Canal et ses ports d'accès, ainsi que dans un rayon de trois milles marins de ces ports, alors même que la Porte serait l'une des Puissances belligérantes.

Les bâtiments de guerre des belligérants ne pourront, dans le Canal et ses ports d'accès, se ravitailler ou s'approvisionner que dans la limite strictement nécessaire. Le transit des dits bâtiments par le Canal s'effectuera dans le plus bref délai d'après les règlements en vigueur et sans autre arrêt que celui qui résulterait des nécessités du service. Leur séjour à Port-Saïd et dans la rade de Suez ne pourra dépasser vingt-quatre heures, sauf le cas de relâche forcée. En pareil cas ils seront tenus de partir le plus tôt possible. Un intervalle de vingt-quatre heures devra toujours s'écouler entre la sortie d'un port d'accès d'un navire belligérant et le départ d'un navire appartenant à la Puissance ennemie.

ARTICLE V.

En temps de guerre les Puissances belligérantes ne débarqueront et ne prendront dans le Canal et ses ports d'accès ni troupes, ni munitions, ni matériel de guerre. Mais dans le cas d'un empêchement accidentel dans le Canal, on pourra embarquer ou débarquer, dans les ports d'accès, des troupes fractionnées par groupe n'excédant pas 1,000 hommes, avec le matériel de guerre correspondant.

ARTICLE VI.

Les prises seront soumises, sous tous les rapports, au même régime que les navires de guerre des belligérants.

ARTICLE VII.

Les Puissances ne maintiendront dans les eaux du Canal (y compris le Lac Timsah et les Lacs Amers) aucun bâtiment de guerre.

Toutefois dans les ports d'accès de Port Saïd et de Suez, elles pourront faire stationner des bâtiments de guerre, dont le nombre ne devra pas excéder deux pour chaque Puissance.

Ce droit ne pourra être exercé par les belligérants.

ARTICLE VIII.

Les Représentants en Égypte des Puissances Signataires du présent Traité seront chargés de veiller à son exécution. En toute circonstance qui menacerait la sécurité ou le libre passage du Canal, ils se réuniront sur la convocation de trois d'entre eux et sous la présidence de leur doyen, pour procéder aux constatations nécessaires. Ils feront connaître au Gouvernement Khédivial le danger qu'ils auront reconnu afin que celui-ci prenne les mesures propres à assurer la protection et le libre usage du Canal.

En tout état de cause ils se réuniront une fois par an pour constater la bonne exécution du Traité.

Ils réclameront notamment la suppression de tout ouvrage ou la dispersion de tout rassemblement qui, sur l'une ou l'autre rive du Canal, pourrait avoir pour but ou pour effet de porter atteinte à la liberté et à l'entière sécurité de la navigation.

ARTICLE IX.

Le Gouvernement Égyptien prendra, dans la limite de ses pouvoirs, tels qu'ils résultent des Firmans, et dans les conditions prévues par le présent Traité, les mesures nécessaires pour faire respecter l'exécution du dit Traité.

Dans le cas où le Gouvernement Égyptien ne disposerait pas de moyens suffisants, il devra faire appel à la Sublime Porte, laquelle se concertera avec les autres Puissances Signataires de la Déclaration de Londres du 17 Mars, 1885, en vue d'arrêter d'un commun accord les mesures à prendre pour répondre à cet appel.

Les prescriptions des Articles IV, V, VII, et VIII ne feront pas obstacle aux mesures qui seront prises en vertu du présent Article.

ARTICLE X.

De même, les prescriptions des Articles IV, V, VII, et VIII ne feront pas obstacle aux mesures que Sa Majesté le Sultan et Son Altesse le Khédive, au nom de Sa Majesté Impériale et dans les limites des Firmans concédés, seraient dans la nécessité de prendre pour assurer, par leurs propres forces, la défense de l'Égypte et le maintien de l'ordre public.

Dans le cas où Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan ou Son Altesse le Khédive se trouverait dans la nécessité de se prévaloir des exceptions prévues par le présent Article, les Puissances Signataires de la Déclaration de Londres en seraient avisées.

ARTICLE XI.

Les mesures qui seront prises dans les cas prévus par les Articles IX et X du présent Traite ne devront pas faire obstacle au libre usage du Canal.

Dans ces mêmes cas l'érection de fortifications permanentes élevées contrairement aux dispositions de l'Article VIII demeure interdite.

ARTICLE XII.

Les Hautes Parties Contractantes conviennent, par application du principe d'égalité en ce qui concerne le libre usage du Canal, principe qui forme l'une des bases du présent Traité, qu'aucune d'elles ne recherchera, par rapport au Canal, d'avantages territoriaux ou commerciaux ni de privilèges dans les arrangements internationaux qui pourront intervenir. Sont d'ailleurs réservés les droits de la Turquie comme Puissance territoriale.

ARTICLE XIII.

En dehors des obligations prévues expressément par les clauses du présent Traité, il n'est porté aucune atteinte aux droits souverains de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, et aux droits et immunités de Son Altesse le Khédive, tels qu'ils résultent des Firmans.

ARTICLE XIV.

Les Hautes Parties Contractantes conviennent que les engagements résultant du présent Traité ne seront pas limités par la durée des Actes de Concession de la Compagnie Universelle du Canal de Suez.

ARTICLE XV.

Les stipulations du présent Traité ne feront pas obstacle aux mesures sanitaires en vigueur en Égypte.

ARTICLE XVI.

Les Hautes Parties Contractantes s'engagent à porter le présent Traité à la connaissance des États qui ne l'ont pas signé, en les invitant à y accéder.

En foi de quoi les Plénipotentiaires respectifs ont signé le présent Traité, et y ont apposé le sceau de leurs armes.

Fait à

No. 30.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 602.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 21, 1887.

IN a despatch of this day's date I have forwarded to you the draft of a Convention, founded on that which was discussed at the International Commission of Paris in 1885, and so modified as to meet the views of Her Majesty's Government. It may be convenient that I should point out what these modifications are.

The International Commission had its origin in the provisions of the 3rd Article of the Declaration of London in March 1885, which laid down the principle that the free usage of the Canal was to be guaranteed to all Powers at all times, and directed the assemblage of a Commission to draw up a Convention for this purpose, based upon Lord Granville's Circular of January 1883. The Commission sat from the 30th March to the 13th June, 1885, and was adjourned without coming to any full agreement, though the differences which had originally separated the Powers were reduced within narrow limits before the close of their labours. The Commission had been persuaded by the arguments of the British Commissioners, Sir Julian Pauncefote and Sir R. Wilson, very considerably to modify the original proposals of the French Government; but there still remained some proposals, insisted upon by the great majority of the Commission, to which the British Delegates were unable to accede. It is with these that we have now to deal.

The provision in the French plan, to which the strongest objection was taken on our side, was the establishment of a Council consisting of special Delegates named by the Powers, sitting together with the captains of their ships on the station, who were to be charged with a general control over the Canal, and the surveillance of the execution of the Treaty. The majority of the Commission altered the composition of the Council, and reduced its powers. Even, however, in its less developed form, Her Majesty's Government were unable to accept it; and to that objection they still adhere. It does not appear to them that any exceptional machinery is required to secure the observance of this Treaty. It is the ordinary function of the Consular Representatives in Egypt to watch over the execution of any Treaty in which their Governments have a common interest; and they do this in concert, meeting under their Doyen, as occasion may demand, and making such representations to the Khedive's Government as may be required. It is not necessary for the security of the present Treaty to employ special Agents, or to invest them with more extensive powers. If the French Government attach importance to the meeting of the Consuls for this purpose once a-year, Her Majesty's Government will not contest an arrangement which, though unnecessary, is harmless. Of course, the well-known rule

remains in vigour, that no collective Resolution of Diplomatic Representatives has any validity unless it is unanimous.

A second point upon which considerable controversy has arisen is the extent to which the Contracting Powers, for the purpose of securing the neutrality of the Canal, should renounce their natural liberty in respect to acts of war, or preparations for war. The project of Treaty presented at the last sitting of the Commission by Great Britain prohibited the "stationing" of any ships of war in the Canal or its ports by a belligerent, or the stationing of more than two by any Power in time of peace. But it was contended, not only on the part of the French Government, but of the large majority of the Commission, that all acts of war, and all acts directed immediately to the preparation of an operation of war, should be forbidden not only in the Canal, but in the ports of access, in the approaches to it, and in the territorial waters of Egypt; and the Vth Article of the project of Treaty protocolled at the closing session as representing the views of the majority of the Powers runs in those terms. As the result of discussions which have taken place subsequently, I believe the Government of France are willing to admit material modifications of this Article. To Her Majesty's Government any reference to the "approaches" of the Canal (which would include the Red Sea), or to the territorial waters of Egypt, independent of the Canal, appears to be open to grave objections. It is not necessary for the neutralization of the Canal that these waters should be in any way affected by the provisions of the Treaty. Her Majesty's Government must also adhere to the objection expressed by my predecessor to the inclusion among the list of acts prohibited in the "ports of access" of "acts having for their object the direct preparation of an operation of war," even in time of peace. Such a provision might operate as a material hindrance to the preparations required for the defence of Egypt.

Similar considerations affected the 6th Article of the Project sanctioned by the majority of the Powers in 1885, to which strong objection was taken by the British Delegates. It consisted of a prohibition of the embarkation or debarkation of troops, munitions, or material of war, either in the Canal or its ports of access, in time of war or in time of peace. This Article appears to Her Majesty's Government now, as it did to the British Delegates, to be far too wide in its application. The prohibition should be confined, in the first place, to times of war and to actual belligerents. The British Delegates further contended that it should only apply to the Canal, and not to the "ports of access." To this contention it is replied that if the landing of armies for hostile purposes was going on at the mouth of the Canal, efforts would certainly be made by the other belligerent to prevent the debarkation, and the prohibition of hostilities in the Canal would become illusory. The difficulty felt by Her Majesty's Government in assenting to the inclusion of the ports of access in this prohibition arises not from any desire to see them used for belligerent purposes, but because it might in time of war be a serious impediment to the transit across the isthmus of reliefs for India, if the Canal happened to be temporarily blocked. In the draft which I have forwarded to you, words have been proposed which would have the effect of guarding against this inconvenience.

The third important point of controversy was the extent to which the territorial Rulers, the Sultan and the Khedive, should be left unfettered to take such measures as they might think fit for defending the Canal from attack. No special powers of any kind being vested in the Consuls, the entire responsibility of defending the Canal was thrown, and, in our judgment, very properly thrown, upon the Sultan and the Khedive, acting within the Firmans. The International Commission proposed words which would restrict them in the performance of this task to the use of their own forces, with a right of appealing to the Six Powers for further aid if their own forces should prove inadequate. The British Delegates demurred to these words, as unduly limiting the freedom of the territorial Sovereign. They were bound to urge this objection, which from the Turkish point of view appears unanswerable. Its force, however, was seriously impaired by the subsequent action of the Ottoman Representative on the Commission, who earnestly pressed that the words should be adopted. Under these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government do not feel bound to insist upon their incompatibility with the rights of the territorial Sovereign.

It is evident that against mere local disturbances the forces at the disposal of the Sultan and the Khedive are always likely to be sufficient. The real question of difficulty would arise if the Canal were attacked by one of the Powers who will be Signatories of the contemplated Treaty. In such a case, no doubt, the territorial Sovereign would need allies, and the neutrality of the Canal would be exposed to much danger if he could not have them. But, on the whole, it appears to be the sounder

view that, in such a case, the Treaty, being broken by one of its Signatories, would lose its force in all respects, and, consequently, would cease to hinder the territorial Sovereign from availing himself of the assistance of any ally he could obtain. On the other hand, the use of any language in the Treaty which should have the effect of allowing the Sultan to suspend its prohibitions in favour of one selected ally might have effects which would not be welcome to this country. The armies of one chosen Power might pour in across the banks and through the ports of the Canal, while every other Power would be forbidden to land a single soldier. Great Britain could have no absolute security that the selection would be in all cases such as she would herself approve. In the accompanying draft, therefore, no alteration is made for the purpose of facilitating the bestowal of any special immunity from the restrictions of the Treaty upon a selected ally.

It seems right that in the employment of their own resources in the defence of the Canal as much liberty as possible should be given to the territorial Rulers. The Article, therefore, which prohibits the military occupation or fortification of any point commanding the Canal or its ports has been left out. The words which have been added at the end of the VIIIth Article will be sufficient to prevent any measures which interfere with the freedom or security of the Canal.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 31.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 604.)

Foreign Office, October 21, 1887.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 600 of this day's date, inclosing the draft of a Convention for securing the freedom of the Suez Canal, I have to request that, in giving it to M. Flourens, you will call his attention to the word "troupes" in Article V.

Some persons have suggested that it might be interpreted so as to deprive unarmed invalid soldiers of access to the military hospitals of Suez and Port Saïd.

You will state to M. Flourens that in the judgment of Her Majesty's Government the Article is capable of bearing no such interpretation.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 32.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 24.)

(No. 410.)

Paris, October 23, 1887.

My Lord,

IN answer to your Lordship's No. 604 of the 21st instant, I have the honour to inform you that M. Flourens told me yesterday that he shares the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, that the word "troupes" does not apply to unarmed and invalid soldiers at Suez and Port Saïd.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 33.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 31.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 24, 1887.

PLEASE let me know directly, by telegraph, when French Minister for Foreign Affairs has signed note.

No. 34.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 24, 5·50 P.M.)

(No. 20.)
(Telegraphic.)

Paris, October 24, 1887, 4·35 P.M.

YOUR telegram No. 30.

M. Flourens has given me amended note to-day in return for the two despatches.

His Excellency wishes to know at once whether your Lordship considers both Governments simultaneously should inform Powers respecting Suez Canal understanding, or whether the communication should be made independently; he inclines to former course.

No. 35.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 414.)
My Lord,

Paris, October 24, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 600, Confidential, of the 21st instant, inclosing the draft of a Convention which contains the stipulations on which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, they can come to an agreement with the Government of the French Republic respecting the free navigation of the Suez Canal; and I have to report that I this day, in accordance with instructions, gave to M. Flourens a copy of this despatch and of the draft Convention which accompanied it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 36.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 415.)
My Lord,

Paris, October 24, 1887.

WITH reference to my preceding despatch, I should state that M. Flourens, while expressing gratification at the termination of the Suez Canal negotiations between the two Governments, said that he would be glad to know whether your Lordship held to any particular form of communication of the result to the Powers.

He thought *primâ facie* the best way would be for the two Governments simultaneously to make communication of the draft Convention to the Powers, as showing that they were in unison on the matter, but he would make the communication at once and separately should you think it equally answered the purpose.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 37.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 416.)
My Lord,

Paris, October 24, 1887.

WITH reference to the draft Convention respecting the Suez Canal, of which I gave copy to-day to M. Flourens, his Excellency remarked that the text of Article VIII of the copy of the draft Convention which I gave him did not in one respect correspond with the text he had of that Article.

In the draft Convention which he accepted from me the text runs, "Ils se réuniront sur la convocation de leur Doyen;" whilst in his text the passage runs, "Ils se réuniront sur la convocation de l'un d'eux et sous la présidence de leur Doyen."

He does not attach any importance to this, and he thinks it very likely that the reading of the draft Convention received from me is the text which was concurred in by the French Representatives in London, and would be willing to let it stand; but

he pointed it out to me, as he thought it probably may have been an oversight, in which case it might be well to correct it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 38.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 33.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 25, 1887, 3·30 P.M.

YOUR telegram No. 20.

The draft Convention prepared by the Commission at Paris having been adopted, subject to modifications in the disputed Articles, we think the proper course now is for the French Government to invite the other Powers represented on the Commission to agree to it as amended in the recent negotiations.

No. 39.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 615. Ext. 33.)

Foreign Office, October 25, 1887.

Sir,

I HAVE received your telegram No. 20 of the 24th instant, stating that M. Flourens wished to know whether Her Majesty's Government considered that the British and French Governments should simultaneously inform the other Powers of the understanding at which they had arrived with regard to the Suez Canal, or whether the communication should be made independently.

I have to-day informed you, by telegraph, that as the draft Convention prepared by the International Commission at Paris in 1885 has been adopted subject to certain modifications in the disputed Articles, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the proper course to pursue will be for the French Government to invite the other Powers represented on that Commission to agree to it as amended in the recent negotiations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 40.

Sir W. Stuart to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 26.)

(No. 92. Confidential.)

The Hague, October 25, 1887.

My Lord,

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 52, Confidential, of the 20th instant, I informed M. de Karnebeek yesterday that Her Majesty's Government would not fail to bear in mind the wish of the Netherlands Government to be represented on any future Commission for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, but that it would, in their opinion, be premature to discuss this point at the present stage of the negotiations.

Whilst expressing his thanks for this information, M. de Karnebeek showed some anxiety to know how far a statement which had appeared in the newspapers, to the effect that an arrangement had now been actually concluded between Her Majesty's Government and that of France upon the Suez Canal question, was well founded; and he begged me to communicate to him as soon as possible any intelligence which I might receive from your Lordship upon the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 41.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 421.)

My Lord,

Paris, October 26, 1887.

ON receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 32 yesterday afternoon I informed M. Flourens that it was the opinion of your Lordship that the French Government should invite the Powers represented in the Commission of Paris to agree to the Convention as amended in the recent negotiations.

His Excellency when I saw him to-day said that he would act as suggested by Her Majesty's Government, but at the same time he would be glad if Her Majesty's Government informed the Governments also that they concurred in the draft Agreement communicated by the French Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 42.

Memorandum communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury by Count d'Aubigny, October 27.

(A.)

LORD SALISBURY a fait savoir à M. Flourens qu'aux yeux du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine il conviendrait que l'arrangement réglant la libre navigation du Canal de Suez fût communiqué par le Gouvernement Français aux Puissances représentées à la Commission de Paris.

M. Flourens est prêt à se rallier à la manière de voir de Lord Salisbury, mais en faisant les démarches nécessaires auprès de ces Puissances il compte déclarer que cette initiative du Gouvernement Français a été prise à la suggestion du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine et pleinement d'accord avec lui. Il entend, en outre, que les Représentants de Sa Majesté la Reine appuieront, conjointement avec ceux de la France, les propositions communes, relatives au Canal de Suez, qui viennent d'être arrêtées.

M. Flourens ne manquera pas, d'ailleurs, de soumettre préalablement au Cabinet de Londres la communication qu'il se propose de faire aux Puissances.

Il pense aussi que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine est d'avis que la communication dont il s'agit soit faite à l'Espagne et aux Pays-Bas dans la même forme qu'aux autres Puissances représentées à la Conférence de Paris, et que ces deux Puissances soient appelées à signer le Traité Définitif.

Albert Gate House, le 27 *Octobre*, 1887.

No. 43.

Memorandum communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury by Count d'Aubigny, October 27.

(B.)

L'ARTICLE 8 du Projet relatif au Canal de Suez porte que les Représentants des Puissances en Égypte se réuniront "sur la convocation de leur Doyen."

Il y a là une erreur matérielle de copiste que M. Flourens a signalée à Mr. Egerton. Le texte en conformité avec la rédaction du Projet de Lord Salisbury du 15 Septembre dernier est le suivant: "sur la convocation d'un d'entre eux et sous la présidence de leur Doyen."

M. Flourens prie Lord Salisbury de vouloir bien donner à Mr. Egerton l'autorisation de rétablir ainsi le texte de l'Article 8.

Albert Gate House, le 27 *Octobre*, 1887.

No. 44.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 34.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 28, 1887, 8·15 P.M.

YOUR despatch No. 416.

I have expressed to French Chargé d'Affaires my willingness to provide in

Article VIII of the Suez Canal Convention that a meeting may be convened by any three Consuls.

Were the power given to any Consul it might be exercised on insufficient grounds.

No. 45.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 619. Ext. 34.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 28, 1887.

IN your despatch No. 416 of the 24th instant, you state that M. Flourens had remarked on a difference of wording in the text of Article VIII of the Suez Canal draft Convention which you had given to him, and that which his Excellency had in his possession; that whilst in the copy he accepted from you the text ran: "ils se réuniront sur la convocation de leur Doyen," in his Excellency's text the words were, "ils se réuniront sur la convocation de l'un d'eux et sous la présidence de leur Doyen."

I have informed the French Chargé d'Affaires that Her Majesty's Government are willing that Article VIII shall be so worded as to provide that a meeting may be convoked by any three Consuls. If the power to call a meeting were placed in the hands of any Consul, there would be no security that it might not be exercised on insufficient grounds.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 46.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. Stuart.

(No. 53.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 28, 1887.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 92, Confidential, of the 25th instant, stating that M. de Karnebeck had expressed a wish to know how far a statement which had appeared in the newspapers, to the effect that an arrangement had been concluded between Her Majesty's Government and the French Government in regard to the Suez Canal question, was well founded.

In reply, I have to state that the draft of a Convention has been agreed to between the British and French Governments, and has been published in the newspapers, together with some despatches explanatory of the negotiations which have resulted in that Agreement.

Copies of the correspondence will shortly be forwarded to you, but in the meanwhile, you may explain to M. de Karnebeck that the concurrence of the other Powers who were represented on the Paris Commission of 1885 will be necessary to give effect to the proposed Convention.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 47.

Sir E. Baring to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 30, 4·40 P.M.)

(No. 231. Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.)

Cairo, October 30, 1887, 3·45 P.M.

CAN you tell me anything about present position of the Suez Canal business which I can communicate to Egyptian Government? Nubar Pasha has said nothing to me, but I hear that he is complaining of the matter being settled without Egyptian Government knowing anything about it.

Reuter has published several telegrams on subject.

No. 48.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 31.)

(No. 401.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 29, 1887.

WHEN I saw Count Bismarck yesterday he had before him a copy of the Suez Canal Convention, signed at Paris by M. Flourens and Mr. Egerton on the 24th instant, which had been given to Baron Plessen at the Foreign Office in London. Count Bismarck asked me how the document was to be brought officially to the cognizance of the German Government, and I replied that, as the original Conference on the Suez Canal had been convened by France, I supposed that the French Government would submit the Convention to the Powers concerned.

I think Count Bismarck only called my attention to the subject, in order that I should understand that the document was not at present before the Imperial Government officially, and that a further communication in form was expected before any official acceptance of it would be given.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 49.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received October 31.)

(No. 406. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, October 29, 1887.

COUNT BISMARCK told me yesterday that M. Herbette, the French Ambassador at this Court, had spoken to him about the Suez Canal Convention, had expressed some doubt as to whether Russia would agree to it, and had inquired of Count Bismarck whether he could give him any information as to the intentions of Russia on the subject.

Count Bismarck said that he had answered M. Herbette in the negative, and had added that he should have thought that the French Government ought to be much better acquainted with the views of the Russian Government than the German Government could be.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 50.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Baring.

(No. 143.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 31, 1887, 10·10 A.M.

YOUR telegram No. 231.

England and France were requested by the Powers who met at Paris in April 1885 to settle the points at issue between them, and to bring back to the Powers, for their assent, the draft Convention so settled. This is now being done. Egypt will in due time, like the other members of the Commission, receive a communication.

No. 51.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 105.)

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, October 31, 1887, 6·35 P.M.

NO Convention has been signed, but a draft has been accepted subject to concurrence of other Powers represented on the Paris Commission.

The draft will be communicated to those Powers by France, inviting their acceptance of it.

No. 52.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 489. Ext. 105.)

Foreign Office, October 31, 1887.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 401 of the 29th instant, in which you state that Count Bismarck had inquired how the Suez Canal Convention was to be brought officially to the cognizance of the German Government.

I have to state, in reply, that no Convention has yet been signed. The draft of a Convention has been agreed to by the British and French Governments subject to the concurrence of the other Powers who were represented on the Commission at Paris in 1885.

The draft in question will be communicated to those Powers by the French Government, who will, at the same time, invite their acceptance of it.

I am, &c.

(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 53.

Sir W. Stuart to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 1.)

(No. 93.)

The Hague, October 30, 1887.

My Lord,

M. DE KARNEBEEK expressed his satisfaction to me yesterday upon being made acquainted by me with the contents of your Lordship's despatch No. 53 of the 28th instant, explaining that the concurrence of the other Powers who were represented on the Paris Commission of 1885 would be necessary to give effect to the proposed Convention upon the Suez Canal question, the draft of which had been agreed to between the British and French Governments.

His Excellency said, moreover, that he was very glad that Great Britain and France had come to an agreement upon that question, as well as upon the question of the New Hebrides, as two sources of trouble, or, as he termed it, two dark spots, had thus been removed from the political horizon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 54.

Draft of Circular to French Representatives.—(Communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury by Count d'Aubigny, November 3, 1887.)

LA Commission Internationale réunie en 1885 pour réglementer le libre usage du Canal de Suez s'étant séparée sans avoir complètement terminé son œuvre, le Gouvernement de la République a pensé que cette Commission ayant eu son siège à Paris, il lui appartenait plus spécialement de s'enquérir des intentions des autres Gouvernements en vue de réduire les dernières difficultés qui étaient restées en suspens. Ces difficultés ne portaient d'ailleurs que sur un très petit nombre de points et il ne semblait pas difficile de les faire disparaître en s'inspirant fidèlement des principes sur lesquels toutes les Puissances étaient déjà tombées d'accord.

Les Gouvernements pressentis par nous ont laissé entendre qu'à leur avis le soin de préparer une solution qu'ils regardent tous comme très nécessaire incombait à l'Angleterre et à la France, et qu'ils ne refuseraient vraisemblablement pas leur adhésion aux clauses qui auraient paru acceptables à ces deux Puissances.

Nous n'avons jamais négligé depuis cette époque de poursuivre ce but, que diverses circonstances ont retardé, mais qui vient d'être atteint. L'entente s'est établie sur tous les points entre le Gouvernement de la Reine et nous, et nous sommes en mesure de soumettre aux Puissances représentées à la Commission de 1885 le projet qui est le résultat de cette entente.

Le Gouvernement de la Reine en nous suggérant de prendre cette initiative, a de nouveau affirmé son complet accord avec nous, et c'est en son nom comme au nôtre que nous prions le Gouvernement . . . . de vouloir bien étudier le projet ci-joint et d'y donner son approbation, si, comme nous en avons l'espoir, il lui paraît conforme

aux principes qui ont présidé aux travaux de la Commission de Paris, et de nature à réaliser l'objet de ses travaux, à savoir, la libre navigation en tout temps du Canal de Suez.

Paragraphe Spécial pour la Sublime Porte proposé à l'agrément de Lord Salisbury.

Nous attachons un prix tout particulier à obtenir l'assentiment de la Porte, dont les deux Puissances se sont appliquées à respecter et à consacrer les droits, dans la pensée que la suzeraineté de Sa Majesté Impériale importe également à l'Égypte et à l'Europe.

No. 55.

M. Catalani to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 3.)

My Lord,

19, *Grosvenor Square, November* 3, 1887.

I AM desired by his Excellency Chevalier Crispi to convey to your Lordship the best thanks of the Italian Government for the draft Convention and the covering despatch to Mr. Egerton, relating to the Suez Canal, which your Lordship was good enough to send me on the 15th instant, for communication to the Italian Government.

The same draft Convention, as I understood, was to be sent the same day to Paris to be proposed to the French Government.

Chevalier Crispi requests me also to add that the draft Convention appears to the Italian Government to be on the whole more favourable to the interests of England and Italy than the former draft. However, the Italian Government reserve to themselves to acquaint your Lordship with any remarks which they may think expedient, as soon as the draft Convention be officially submitted to their consideration and to their approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. CATALANI.

No. 56.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 630.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 3, 1887.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 619 of the 28th ultimo, I transmit to you herewith the amended text of Article VIII of the Suez Canal draft Convention as agreed to by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Amended Text of Article VIII of the Suez Canal Draft Convention.

LES Représentants en Égypte des Puissances Signataires du présent Traité seront chargés de veiller à son exécution. En toute circonstance qui menacerait la sécurité ou le libre passage du Canal, ils se réuniront sur la convocation de trois d'entre eux et sous la présidence de leur Doyen, pour procéder aux constatations nécessaires. Ils feront connaître au Gouvernement Khédivial le danger qu'ils auront reconnu afin que celui-ci prenne les mesures propres à assurer la protection et le libre usage du Canal.

En tout état de cause ils se réuniront une fois par an pour constater la bonne exécution du Traité.

Ils réclameront notamment la suppression de tout ouvrage ou la dispersion de tout rassemblement qui sur l'une on l'autre rive du Canal pourrait avoir pour but ou pour effet de porter atteinte à la liberté et à l'entière sécurité de la navigation.

No. 57.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Count d'Aubigny.

M. le Chargé d'Affaires,

Foreign Office, November 3, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government are prepared to accept the amended text of Article VIII of the Suez Canal draft Convention which you have submitted to me.

Article VIII will, therefore, run as follows:—

"Les Représentants en Égypte des Puissances Signataires du présent Traité seront chargés de veiller à son exécution. En toute circonstance qui menacerait la sécurité ou le libre passage du Canal, ils se réuniront sur la convocation de trois d'entre eux et sous la présidence de leur Doyen, pour procéder aux constatations nécessaires. Ils feront connaître," &c.

Her Majesty's Minister at Paris will be informed that this alteration has been agreed upon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 58.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 632.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 4, 1887.

THE French Chargé d'Affaires has communicated to me a copy of the Circular which the French Government propose to address to the Powers who were represented in the Paris Commission of 1885, inviting their acceptance of the draft Convention for guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal by all Powers at all times, which has been agreed to between the British and French Governments.

I inclose a copy of this Circular for your information,* and I have to request that you will inform M. Flourens that Her Majesty's Government have much pleasure in intimating their acquiescence in its terms.

I transmit, for your information and for communication to M. Flourens, copies of two Circular despatches which I propose to address to Her Majesty's Representatives at the Courts of the Powers interested,† the first authorizing them to support the communication which will be made by their French colleagues, by expressing the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the terms of the Convention will meet with the approval of the other Powers; the second inclosing copy of my despatch to you No. 600 of the 21st October, and of the correspondence relative to the construction to be placed on Article V of the Convention.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 59.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Her Majesty's Representatives at Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, Rome, the Hague, St. Petersburgh, Constantinople, and Cairo.

(A.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 4, 1887.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith, in duplicate, the draft of a Convention for guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal by all Powers at all times. The draft represents the arrangement agreed upon by Her Majesty's Government in concert with that of France. In pursuance of a general wish expressed by the other Governments represented in the International Commission of 1885, its terms have been discussed and settled between Great Britain and France alone in the first instance. As, however, the Governments of Italy and Great Britain had acted together upon certain questions which arose in the Commission, a reference was also made by Her Majesty's Government to the Italian Government before the final draft was agreed upon.

* French draft Circular.

† See Nos. 59 and 60.

The French Government have undertaken to communicate the draft to the Powers who were represented in the Commission, and to invite their adhesion to it.

[* You are authorized to support the communication which will be made by the French Representative on the subject by expressing the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the terms of the proposed Convention will meet with the approval of that of .]

[† You are authorized to support the communication which will be made by the French Representative on the subject by expressing the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the Government of Italy will be prepared to join in the signature of the Convention, the terms of which have already been approved by them.]

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 60.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Her Majesty's Representatives at Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, Rome, the Hague, St. Petersburgh, Constantinople, and Cairo.

(B.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 4, 1887.

WITH reference to my despatch No. of this day, relative to the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, I transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris,‡ giving an account of the discussions which have led to the settlement of this draft and of the conditions under which Her Majesty's Government have expressed their willingness to agree to it.

I also inclose copies of correspondence relative to the construction to be placed on Article V of the Convention,§ from which it will be perceived that the French Government and that of Her Majesty are agreed that the prohibition to disembark troops in the Canal and its ports of access, contained in that Article, cannot be interpreted as depriving unarmed invalid soldiers of access to the military hospitals of Suez and Port Said.

You will communicate copies of these three papers to the Government to which you are accredited.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 61.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Her Majesty's Representatives at Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, Rome, the Hague, St. Petersburgh, Constantinople, and Cairo.

(C.)
(Confidential.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 4, 1887.

WITH reference to my despatch No. of this day, inclosing copies of the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, I inclose herewith a copy of the Circular which has been addressed by M. Flourens to the French Representatives at the various Courts concerned inviting acceptance of the Convention.‖

This despatch has been communicated to me as a draft by the French Chargé d'Affaires, and is intended for your own information only.

I also inclose, for your own information, and not for communication, a copy of a despatch to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris,¶ giving an account of the considerations which have induced Her Majesty's Government to agree to the present draft.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

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* Not to Rome.
† To Rome only.
‡ Nos. 29 and 31.
§ No. 32.
‖ French Circular.
¶ No. 30.

No. 63*.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, November 7, 1887, 5·30 P.M.

I LEARN from Italian Chargé d'Affaires that Baron Blanc reports that M. de Nélidoff and Count de Montebello are preparing some new proposal, also that Sultan is more than ever under Russian influence. Is that your impression?

No. 62.

*The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.**

(No. 38.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, November 7, 1887, 5·30 P.M.

MY despatch No. 632 of 4th instant: Suez Canal Convention.

Do not communicate Circular to French Government until you hear further.

If you have already done so, ask for its return, as I may wish to add a few words.

No. 63.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Baring.

(No. 149.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, November 7, 1887, 5·40 P.M.

SUEZ CANAL Agreement.

Delay acting on my despatch No. 313 of 4th until you hear further.

No. 64.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 425.)

Berlin, November 5, 1887.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 401 of the 29th ultimo, and your Lordship's telegram No. 105 of the 31st ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have mentioned to Count Bismarck that no Convention regarding the Suez Canal was signed, that a draft only had been agreed to between the British and French Governments, subject to the concurrence of the other Powers represented on the Paris Commission, and that this draft would be communicated to those Powers by France, who would invite their acceptance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 65.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 8, 11 P.M.)

(No. 90. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, November 8, 1887, 7·40 P.M.

YOUR telegram No. 131 of yesterday.

My own information is, that Russian influence at the Palace is on the increase just now. Of course there is a good deal of intrigue going on, and the French Ambassador is discontented with the Grand Vizier. The latter says *à propos* of the Suez Canal Convention, that Turkey regrets not having ratified the Wolff Convention under French advice, but I see as yet no imminent danger. The Sultan has expressed a wish to see me on Friday next, by which time I hope to be in a position to speak more positively.

No. 66.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 8, 11 P.M.)

(No. 47.)
(Telegraphic.)

Rome, November 8, 1887, 8·26 P.M.

YOUR telegram No. 93.

Note concerning Suez Canal Convention was sent in, but has been returned.

* Also to Sir J. Savile (No. 93).

No. 67.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 350. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, November 5, 1887.

COUNT MONTEBELLO returned to his post from leave on Monday last the 1st instant, and now all the Ambassadors are back at Constantinople.

I believe the Count has had some conversation at the Sublime Porte concerning the arrangement recently concluded between France and Her Majesty's Government on the subject of the neutrality of the Suez Canal.

The accompanying paragraph appeared yesterday in the "Turquie" (on this subject), a paper supposed to be connected with the French Embassy, and almost looks like a "communiqué" were it not for its unfriendly tone towards England, which would appear very bad taste on this occasion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 67.

Extract from "La Turquie" of November 4, 1887.

FRANCE ET TURQUIE.—Nous croyons savoir qu'aujourd'hui dans l'après-midi, M. le Comte de Montebello, Ambassadeur de France, remettra à son Excellence Saïd Pacha le texte officiel de la récente Convention conclue entre l'Angleterre et la France relativement à la neutralité du Canal du Suez. On nous dit également que ce diplomate Français a été chargé par M. Flourens de déclarer à la Sublime Porte que pendant toute la durée des négociations le Gouvernement de la République s'est préoccupé avant tout de sauvegarder les droits de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et les intérêts de l'Empire Ottoman.

No. 68.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 446.)
My Lord

Paris, November 8, 1887.

IN accordance with your Lordship's telegram No. 38 of yesterday's date, I asked M. Flourens to return to me the draft English Circular respecting the Suez Canal Convention, which was inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 632 of the 4th instant, and which I communicated to him yesterday as instructed.

He at once did so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 69.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 12.)

(No. 354. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, November 7, 1887.

AS your Lordship may be desirous to hear the effect produced in official circles at Constantinople by the news of the conclusion of an Agreement between France and ourselves as to the neutralization of the Suez Canal, I have the honour to report that, on the whole, this event has produced hardly any impression, and it may be said that the report of it was received with indifference.

I understand that the French Ambassador has as yet made no official communication on the subject, although the contrary has been asserted in the newspapers. But the Sublime Porte has received copies of the Agreement from the Ottoman Ambassadors in London and Paris.

The unofficial language of the Turkish Ministers as to this Agreement is to the

effect that they are surprised that France should have concluded it without consulting them as to their views on the subject, and that the Republic had thus disregarded the promises made to the Sultan and the Sublime Porte in July last by its Ambassador here, and that from his Excellency's language they were led to expect that France was going to exert itself to obtain better terms for the evacuation of Egypt than those agreed upon by them with Sir H. Drummond Wolff, and that so far, they had reason to complain and to feel disappointed.

I am also secretly informed that the Grand Vizier has represented to the Sultan how much better it would have been for Turkey to have ratified the above-mentioned Convention.

The Russian Embassy had been working for some time to bring about the fall of Kiamil Pasha, and now the French are offended by his retrospective reproaches and will no doubt seek to assist their Russian friends in this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

P.S.—I have also the honour to inclose translation of an extract from the "Tarik" of the 8th November, as follows:—

"In order to discuss the Convention lately concluded between England and France with respect to the Suez Canal, yesterday a Special Commission was formed under the presidency of the Grand Vizier, consisting of Aarify Pasha, President of the Council of State, and the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and for Justice."

W. A. W.

No. 70.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 12, 3·15 P.M.)

(No. 92.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, November 12, 1887, 11·40 A.M.

FRENCH Ambassador has instructions to present Suez Canal Convention to Porte to-day. His Excellency informs me that, to meet susceptibilities of Turkey, it will be laid before the other Powers after short delay.

No. 71.

Note Verbale communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury by M. Waddington, November 13, 1887.

M. FLOURENS a donné l'ordre à M. de Montebello à la date du 10 de ce mois de communiquer à la Porte la Convention relative à la liberté du Canal de Suez dans les termes convenus. Cette communication officielle a dû être faite hier 12 Novembre.

M. Flourens a adressé également des instructions à nos Ambassadeurs à Berlin, à Vienne, à Pétersbourg, à Rome, à Madrid, et à notre Ministre à la Haye pour que cette communication soit faite demain Lundi 14 Novembre aux Gouvernements auprès desquels ils sont accrédités.

M. Waddington a été chargé par M. Flourens de faire savoir d'urgence à Lord Salisbury les informations qui précèdent et de le prier de vouloir bien envoyer de son côté les instructions qu'il se propose d'adresser à ses Agents pour qu'ils recommandent l'adoption de la Convention relative à la liberté du Canal de Suez.

Albert Gate, le 13 Novembre, 1887.

No. 72.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 13, 3·45 P.M.)

(No. 58.)
(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, November 13, 1887, 2·50 P.M.

THE French Ambassador here informs me that he has received instructions to make an identic communication about the Suez Canal with me to-morrow, Monday, to Count Bismarck.

I have told his Excellency that I have not as yet received any instructions on the subject, but that I would telegraph to you.

No. 73.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, November 13.)

(No. 433. Ext. 58.)
My Lord, *Berlin, November* 13, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to state to your Lordship that M. Herbette informs me that he has been instructed by his Government to make an identic communication with me to Count Bismarck to-morrow, Monday, on the subject of the Suez Canal.

I have informed his Excellency that as yet I have received no instructions, but that I would telegraph to your Lordship on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 74.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 13, 10·45 P.M.)

(No. 59.)
(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, November* 13, 1887, 5·45 P.M.

MY telegram No. 58 of to-day.

French Ambassador wishes me to explain that his instructions do not necessarily imply that the communications to be made by him and me are to be "identical."

A word is missing in the telegram to him. It may equally be "analogous."

No. 75.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, November 13.)

(No. 434. Ext. 59.)
My Lord, *Berlin, November* 13, 1887.

WITH reference to my telegram to your Lordship No. 58 of to-day's date respecting an identic communication which the French Ambassador stated that he had been instructed to make with me on the subject of the Suez Canal, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that M. Herbette is anxious that I should explain that the instructions which he has received on the subject do not of necessity imply that his communication and mine are to be "identical." His Excellency states that there is a word missing in the telegram received by him on the subject, and that the word "identical" may with equal probability be rendered by "analogous."

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 76.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 13, 10·45 P.M.)

(No. 48.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, November* 13, 1887, 8·10 P.M.

FRENCH Chargé d'Affaires has received orders to present the project of Suez Canal Convention, and copy of Circular from French Government communicating it to the other Powers, as well as your Lordship's letter to Mr. Egerton, if I present it. He will do this to-morrow at 3, and call to inquire what documents I should present to the Italian Government, and when.

No. 77.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, November 13.)

(No. 267. Ext. 48.)
My Lord, *Rome, November* 13, 1887.

I HAVE this day reported by telegraph that orders have been received by the French Chargé d'Affaires to present the project of the Suez Canal Convention, together with a copy of the Circular in which the French Government communicated it to the other Powers, as well as the letter from your Lordship to Mr. Egerton, if I present it. M. Gérard, the French Chargé d'Affaires, will do this at 3 o'clock to-morrow afternoon, and he called upon me to inquire what were the documents I should present to the Italian Government, and when I should present them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE.

No. 78.

*The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir R. Morier.**

(No. 134.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November* 14, 1887.

GIVE general support to communication to be made by French Ambassador in favour of Suez Canal Convention. The despatch and inclosures are on the way.

No. 79.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 14, 6·45 P.M.)

(No. 93.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, November* 14, 1887, 4·6 P.M.

YOUR Lordship's telegram No. 133 of to-day.

Count de Montebello communicated officially to the Porte on Saturday last, the 12th instant, a copy of the arrangement signed at Paris with regard to the neutrality of the Suez Canal, as well as copies of certain other despatches.

No. 80.

Sir R. Morier to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 14, 11 P.M.)

(No. 76.)
(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, November* 14, 1887, 9·55 P.M.

FRENCH Chargé d'Affaires this morning addressed a note to Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs communicating the draft of Suez Canal Convention, your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Egerton of 21st October, and French Circular on the subject.

He had seen M. de Giers, who said matter must keep till Emperor's return.

I called at Ministry to speak in the sense of your telegram No. 134, but did not find M. de Giers at home.

No. 81.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.†

(No. 268. Ext. 133.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 14, 1887.

IN anticipation of my Circular despatch of the 4th instant, which is now on its way, relative to the draft Suez Canal Convention, which has been agreed upon by

* Also to Sir E. Malet (No. 111), Mr. Phipps (No 101), Sir J. Savile (No. 97), Sir W. Stuart, Sir Clare Ford (No. 23), Sir W. White (No. 133), and Sir E. Baring (No. 152).

† Also to Sir R. Morier (No. 294), Sir E. Baring (No. 325), Sir E. Malet (No. 508), Mr. Phipps (No. 198), Sir J. Savile (No. 323), Sir Clare Ford (No. 167), and Sir W. Stuart (No. 57).

the British and French Governments, I have to-day instructed you by telegraph to support the communication which will be made by your French colleague to the Government to which you are accredited on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 82.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 657 A.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 14, 1887.

I HAVE been informed by the French Ambassador that M. Flourens had instructed Count de Montebello to communicate the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal to the Porte on the 12th instant, and that instructions had been sent to the French Representative at Vienna, St. Petersburgh, Rome, Madrid, and the Hague to make the same communication to-day.

I have telegraphed to Her Majesty's Representatives at the Courts in question, requesting them to give general support to the communication which will be made by their French colleagues, and informing them that a more detailed instruction is on its way to them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 83.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 17, 10·30 P.M.)

(No. 50.)
(Telegraphic.)

Rome, November 17, 1887, 6·45 P.M.

MAY I communicate copy of your Lordship's despatch No. 311 of 4th November to Signor Crispi?

No. 84.

Sir W. Stuart to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 18.)

(No. 97.)
My Lord,

The Hague, November 17, 1887.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatches Nos. 54 and 55 of the 4th instant, relative to the draft Convention agreed to by Her Majesty's Government and that of France for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a note which I have this day addressed to the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs, communicating to him the correspondence contained in the latter despatch, and expressing the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the terms of the proposed Convention will meet with the approval of the Netherlands Government.

I ascertained from my French colleague, M. Louis Legrand, yesterday afternoon that he had already communicated the draft of Convention to the Netherlands Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

Inclosure in No. 84.

Sir W. Stuart to M. de Karnebeek.

M. le Ministre,

The Hague, November 17, 1887.

THE draft of Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, as agreed upon by Her Majesty's Government in concert with that of France, has, I understand, been communicated to your Excellency by the French Minister at this Court in the name of the two Governments.

In connection therewith, and in accordance with instructions which I have received from the Marquis of Salisbury, I have the honour to communicate to your Excellency the accompanying copy of a despatch from his Lordship to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris, giving an account of the discussions which have led to the settlement of the draft Convention, and of the conditions under which Her Majesty's Government has expressed their willingness to agree to it.

I have also the honour to inclose copies of correspondence relative to the construction to be placed on Article V of the Convention, from which it will be seen that the French Government and that of Her Majesty are agreed that the prohibition to disembark troops in the Canal or its ports of access, contained in that Article, cannot be interpreted as depriving unarmed invalid soldiers of access to the military hospitals at Suez and Port Saïd.

I am at the same time instructed to express the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the terms of the proposed Convention will meet with the approval of the Netherlands Government.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 85.

Sir Clare Ford to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 18, 11 P.M.)

(No. 29.)
(Telegraphic.)

Madrid, November 18, 1887, 6·15 P.M.

YOUR Lordship's telegram No. 23 and your despatch No. 159 of the 4th instant.

I saw Minister for Foreign Affairs to-day, and carried out your instructions. French Ambassador had just left him, and had made the communication respecting the Suez Canal Convention.

I communicated to his Excellency copies of the three papers contained in your despatch No. 165.

Minister for Foreign Affairs stated that he was happy to agree in principle to the Convention, and that he would bring the matter before the Council of Ministers which was to be held to-morrow.

No. 86.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 18, 11 P.M.)

(No. 51.)
(Telegraphic.)

Rome, November 18, 1887, 6·15 P.M.

FRENCH Chargé d'Affaires learnt yesterday from Signor Crispi that Italian Government accept draft Suez Canal Convention, and will use best endeavours to obtain its acceptance by other Powers.

No. 87.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, November 18.)

(No. 276. Ext. 51.)
My Lord,

Rome, November 18, 1887.

I HAVE reported to your Lordship this day, by telegraph, that M. Crispi had yesterday informed the French Chargé d'Affaires that the Italian Government would accept the draft of the Suez Canal Convention, and, further, that they would endeavour, to the best of their ability, to induce the other Powers to accept it likewise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE.

No. 88.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 19.)

(No. 402.)

My Lord, *Vienna, November* 16, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt this afternoon by post of your Lordship's despatch No. 193 of the 4th instant, transmitting to me the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, as well as of your Lordship's despatch No. 196 of the same date, inclosing other correspondence on the same subject, copies of which I am instructed to communicate to the Imperial and Royal Government.

I have the honour to inclose copy of a note which I thereupon addressed to the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs in conformity with your Lordship's instructions.

I had already, on receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 101 of the 14th instant, informed Count Kálnoky that I was authorized to support the communication which will be made by the French Chargé d'Affaires on the subject, and I at once called on the Marquis de Montmarin and made an intimation to him to the same effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

Inclosure in No. 88.

Mr. Phipps to Count Kálnoky.

M. le Comte, *Vienna, November* 16, 1887.

HER Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has informed me that the French Government have undertaken to communicate to the Imperial and Royal Government, as well as to the other Governments represented in the International Commission of 1885, the draft Convention representing the arrangement agreed upon between the Governments of France and Great Britain for guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal by all the Powers at all times, and, at the same time, to invite their adhesion to it.

It consequently only devolves on me, in compliance with the instructions which I have received from Lord Salisbury, to express to your Excellency the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the terms of the proposed Convention will meet with the approval of that of Austria-Hungary.

I am instructed, at the same time, to communicate to the Austro-Hungarian Government a copy of a despatch to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris, giving an account of the discussions which have led to the settlement of this draft, and of the conditions under which Her Majesty's Government have expressed their willingness to adhere to it.

I am further to place in your Excellency's hands the inclosed copies of correspondence relative to the construction to be placed on Article V of the Convention, from which your Excellency will perceive that the French Government and that of Her Majesty are agreed that the prohibition to disembark troops in the Canal and its posts of access contained in that Article cannot be interpreted as depriving unarmed invalid soldiers of access to the military hospitals of Suez and Port Saïd.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

No. 89.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 19.)

(No. 464A.)

My Lord, *Paris, November* 16, 1887.

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 632 of the 4th instant, I this day communicated to his Excellency M. Flourens copies of the two Circular despatches to be addressed to Her Majesty's Representatives at the Courts of the Powers interested in the Convention for guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal at all times, which Circulars were inclosed in your Lordship's above-mentioned despatch.*

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 90.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Egerton.

(No. 666.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 19, 1887.

M. WADDINGTON showed me to-day a letter from M. Flourens, which he placed in my hand, but of which he did not give me a copy, stating that the latter had been asked by the Dutch Government for an explanation of the reservation made in my despatch to you in the terms originally used by Sir Julian Pauncefote at the Conference.

The answer M. Flourens states himself to have given was to the effect that Great Britain, during her occupation of Egypt, which was an exceptional and transitory state of things, would not be trammelled by the provisions of the Convention; and on the principle of the extension of equality to all Powers, the French Government understood a similar principle to extend to the other Signatories.

M. Waddington asked me what my opinion of this answer was.

I replied that the last part of it was not intelligible to me, but that I had no ground for objecting to M. Flourens having made it to the Dutch Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 91.

Sir R. Morier to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 377.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, November* 14, 1887.

COUNT D'ORMESSON, the French Chargé d'Affaires, called on me early this afternoon and said he had yesterday received instructions to communicate the following documents to the Russian Government: the draft of the Suez Canal Convention, your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Egerton of the 21st October, and the French Circular as agreed to by Her Majesty's Government. He had accordingly done so in a note this morning, and had subsequently called on M. de Giers, who told him that the matter would be taken into consideration immediately upon the Emperor's return. He asked me whether I had received similar instructions, and I said I had not. Shortly afterwards I received your telegram No. 134, instructing me to give general support to this communication. I at once called at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but did not find M. de Giers at home. I, therefore, in a private letter, gave him the substance of your Lordship's telegram, and received a reply saying that, on the Emperor's return, the matter would be taken in hand.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. B. D. MORIER.

No. 92.

Sir R. Morier to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 378.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, November* 16, 1887.

M. DE GIERS, when I saw him this afternoon, referring to the communication made to him by Comte d'Ormesson on the subject of the Suez Canal Convention, and to the support given by me to that instrument in my private letter to his Excellency, repeated that the matter would have to lie by till the Emperor's return. He added, however, that he supposed that if all other Powers assented, Russia would not raise any objections.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. B. D. MORIER.

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* Circular (A), November 4, 1 Inclosure; Circular (B), November , 3 Inclosures.

No. 93.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 275.)

My Lord, *Rome, November* 17, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt this morning of your Lordship's despatches Nos. 311, 324, and 325 of the 4th instant respecting the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, and to transmit herewith copies of the two notes which I addressed to Signor Crispi on the subject, and delivered to his Excellency in person this afternoon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 93.

Sir J. Savile to Signor Crispi.

M. le Ministre, *Rome, November* 17, 1887.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith the draft of a Convention for guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal by all Powers at all times, which has been agreed upon beforehand by Her Majesty's Government in concert with that of France, in pursuance of a general wish expressed by the other Governments represented in the International Commission of 1885.

The French Government, as your Excellency is aware, have undertaken to communicate the draft in question to the Powers who were represented in the Commission, and to invite their adhesion to it; and I have accordingly been authorized by the Marquis of Salisbury to support the communication which has been made to you on the subject by M. Gérard, by expressing the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the Government of Italy will be prepared to join in the signature of the Convention, the terms of which have already been approved by them.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 93.

Sir J. Savile to Signor Crispi.

M. le Ministre, *Rome, November* 17, 1887.

WITH reference to my preceding note of this day's date relative to the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency, in compliance with the instructions which I have received from the Marquis of Salisbury, copy of a despatch addressed by his Lordship to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris, giving an account of the discussions which have led to the settlement of the draft in question, and of the conditions under which Her Majesty's Government have expressed their willingness to agree to it.

I am further instructed to communicate the inclosed copies of correspondence relative to the construction to be placed on Article V of the Convention, from which it will be seen that the French Government and that of Her Majesty are agreed that the prohibition to disembark troops in the Canal and its ports of access, contained in that Article, cannot be interpreted as depriving unarmed invalid soldiers of access to the military hospitals of Suez and Port Saïd.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE.

No. 94.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 439.)

My Lord, *Berlin, November* 19, 1887.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 111 of the 14th instant, instructing me to give a general support to the communication relative to the free

navigation of the Suez Canal to be made to Count Bismarck by the French Ambassador, M. Herbette, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that M. Herbette made the communication in question on the 15th instant to Count Bismarck, and that I immediately afterwards executed your Lordship's above-mentioned instructions.

On the following morning I had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatches on the same subject Nos. 495, 506, and 507, all of the 4th instant, and I in consequence addressed to Count Bismarck the note of which I have the honour to inclose a copy herewith.

The communication made by M. Herbette to Count Bismarck consisted of the French Circular, copy of which accompanied your Lordship's despatch to me No. 507, of the draft Convention, and of your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Egerton of the 21st October, giving an account of the discussions which had led to it.

Count Bismarck informed me that he had told the French Ambassador that he proposed to consult the Austrian and Italian Governments before giving a reply because they were primarily interested, but that he did not think that any difficulty would be made about agreeing to the draft proposed.

M. Herbette tells me that, in consequence of subsequent instructions from his Government, he has addressed a note to Count Bismarck to say that the British and French Governments are agreed, with reference to Article V, that the prohibition to disembark troops in the Canal and its ports of access cannot be interpreted as depriving unarmed invalid soldiers of access to the military hospitals of Suez and Port Saïd.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Sir E. Malet to Count Bismarck.

M. le Secrétaire d'État, *Berlin, November* 16, 1887.

I HAD the honour to inform your Excellency yesterday that I was desired by Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to support the communication made to your Excellency by the French Ambassador relative to the Suez Canal, when his Excellency submitted to your Excellency the draft of a Convention for guaranteeing its free use by all Powers at all times; and I expressed the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the terms of the proposed Convention would meet with the approval of the Imperial Government.

With reference to this verbal communication on my part, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith, under instructions from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a despatch from his Lordship to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris, giving an account of the discussions which have led to the settlement of the draft in question, and of the conditions under which Her Majesty's Government have expressed their willingness to agree to it.

I have also the honour to inclose copies of a correspondence relative to the construction to be placed on Article V of the Convention, from which it will be seen that Her Majesty's Government and the Government of France are agreed that the prohibition to disembark troops in the Canal and its ports of access, contained in that Article, cannot be interpreted as depriving unarmed invalid soldiers of access to the military hospitals of Suez and Port Saïd.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 95.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir J. Savile.

(No. 101.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November* 21, 1887, 6 P.M.

YOUR telegram No. 54 of 19th instant.

You may give copy of my despatch No. 311.

No. 96.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. Stuart.

(No. 58.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 21, 1887.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 97 of the 17th instant, together with copy of the note which you addressed to the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs, communicating to his Excellency the correspondence respecting the draft Suez Canal Convention which has been agreed upon between the British and French Governments, and expressing the hope that the proposed Convention would meet with the concurrence of the Netherlands Government.

The terms of your note to M. de Karnebeek are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 97.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 518.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 23, 1887.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 439 of the 19th instant, inclosing copy of the note which you addressed to Count Bismarck in support of the communication made to the German Government by the French Ambassador respecting the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

Your Excellency's proceedings, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch, are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 98.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir J. Savile.

(No. 330.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 23, 1887.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 275 of the 17th instant, and I approve the terms of the notes, copies of which are therein inclosed, which you addressed to Signor Crispi, expressing the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the Italian Government will be prepared to join in the signature of the Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, and forwarding papers in explanation of the draft Convention.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 99.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Mr. Phipps.

(No. 204.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, November 23, 1887.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 402 of the 16th instant, and I approve the terms of the note, a copy of which is therein inclosed, which you addressed to Count Kálnoky, communicating to his Excellency the correspondence respecting the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, and expressing the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the proposed Convention will meet with the approval of that of Austria-Hungary.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 100.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 26, 11 P.M.)

(No. 75.)
(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, November 26, 1887, 7·15 P.M.

SUEZ CANAL Convention.

Minister for Foreign Affairs says there will be no objection to Agreement of Austrian Government; but proposes, like Italy, to await, out of deference to Porte, Turkish sanction. Should that, however, be unduly delayed, Austria will give formal acceptance without it. Germany will do same; he knows nothing of Russian intention. His Excellency has informed French Ambassador.

No. 101.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, November 26.)

(No. 417. Ext. 75.)
My Lord,

Vienna, November 26, 1887.

THE Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me to-day that this Government will offer no objection to the Suez Canal Convention, the draft of which was communicated by the French Chargé d'Affaires on the 15th instant.

The Imperial and Royal Government, however, proposes, like that of Italy, to await, out of deference to the Porte, the Sultan's sanction to the Convention. Should such sanction, however, be unduly delayed, Count Kálnoky expressed his intention of conveying the formal approval of Austria-Hungary without waiting.

The German Government, his Excellency added, would, he believed, act in a similar manner, but he was not aware what steps Russia proposed to adopt.

His Excellency informed me that he conveyed similar information to the French Ambassador.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

No. 102.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 28.)

E
(No. 446.)
My Lord,

Berlin, November 22, 1887.

M. HERBETTE, the French Ambassador at this Court, placed in my hands yesterday two documents relative to the draft Convention regarding the Suez Canal, of which I have the honour to inclose copies herewith.

The first gives a question formulated by the Dutch Government concerning the observation contained in your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Egerton of the 21st October, to the effect that the provisions of the Convention will only come into operation in so far as they are compatible with the state of affairs at present existing in Egypt.

The second is the reply of the French Government, which his Excellency informed me was drawn up in agreement with Her Majesty's Government.

M. Herbette proposes to communicate these papers to the German Government should the question arise.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

Inclosure 1 in No. 102.

Question put by the Netherlands Government.

IL importerait de savoir si cette réserve doit être considérée comme applicable aussi au présent projet de Convention, et, dans ce cas, quels seront, aussi longtemps que cette réserve demeure opérative, les droits et les obligations des autres Puissances qui signeront la Convention?

Inclosure 2 in No. 102.

Reply to the Question put by the Netherlands Government (arranged with the Cabinet of London).

LE Gouvernement de la Grande-Bretagne ayant jugé opportun, sans rencontrer d'objection du Gouvernement Français, de renouveler dans la lettre adressée par Lord Salisbury à Mr. Egerton le 21 Octobre dernier les réserves générales exprimées à la clôture de la Commission de 1885, par Sir J. Pauncefote, ces réserves s'appliquent au projet de Convention actuel. Il en résulte que les dispositions de cette Convention, qui fixe le régime définitif destiné à garantir le libre usage du Canal de Suez, ne sont actuellement applicables qu'en tant qu'elles sont compatibles avec l'état où se trouve l'Égypte, état qui est qualifié de transitoire et d'exceptionnel. Les dispositions de la présente Convention ne sauraient donc entraver la liberté d'action du Gouvernement de la Grande-Bretagne pendant la période de l'occupation. En ne faisant pas d'objection à cette énonciation, le Gouvernement de la République entend que, conformément aux principes qui reconnaissent l'égalité des Puissances dans leurs droits et leurs obligations relativement au Canal de Suez, toutes sont naturellement appelées à bénéficier des réserves faites aussi longtemps que les circonstances les rendront effectives.

No. 103.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 28.)

E

(No. 456. Confidential.)

Berlin, November 26, 1887.

My Lord,

I ASKED Count Bismarck to-day whether he had made any answer as yet to the French Ambassador on the subject of the draft Convention relating to the Suez Canal. His Excellency replied that he had not, and that he did not propose to give one before Austria and Italy. He added that he could tell me, confidentially, that Count Kálnoky thought that it would be an act of deference, which would be agreeable to the Sultan, if Austria and Italy refrained from sending in their adhesion until the Porte should have given its assent.

Count Bismarck said that he thought that this was a good idea, and that he had supported it to Signor Crispi.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 104.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 28, 3·15 P.M.)

(No. 76. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, November 28, 1887, 3·4 P.M.

SUEZ CANAL Convention.

French Ambassador told me Count Kálnoky inquired by what mode consent of Powers would be accorded, and that his Excellency seemed to think some more formal or collective step might be necessary than mere communications through Representatives at Paris.

No. 105.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, November 28.)

(No. 420. Confidential. Ext. 76.)

Vienna, November 28, 1887.

My Lord,

I CALLED yesterday on the French Ambassador, who had just returned after an absence from Vienna of three months.

On the conversation turning on the Suez Canal Convention, his Excellency

informed me that he had spoken to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject who had held language in the sense reported in my telegram No. 75 of the 26th instant. But Count Kálnoky had in the course of conversation inquired in what mode it was proposed that the consent of the Powers should be intimated to the Convention, and M. Decrais derived the impression that his Excellency anticipated that some more formal or collective assent would be necessary than a mere communication through the Representatives of the Powers at Paris.

M. Decrais told me that he was somewhat surprised at this question, as he was entirely without instructions which enabled him to give a reply, and he had himself believed that the assent of the Powers would merely be expressed by means of communications sent through the respective Representatives at Paris. He added that the conversation with Count Kálnoky had been quite of an informal character, but that his Excellency had even vaguely alluded to the possibility of a Conference being requisite in order that the necessary assent should be conveyed.

When I have an opportunity of seeing Count Kálnoky, probably next Wednesday, I shall no doubt be able to ascertain what his Excellency meant, as I am inclined to believe that there must have been some misunderstanding.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

No. 106.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 527.)

Foreign Office, November 29, 1887.

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 446 of the 22nd instant, forwarding copies of two papers which were given to you by your French colleague.

The first of these papers contains an inquiry addressed to the French Government by that of the Netherlands as to the exact meaning of the reservation made by Her Majesty's Government in regard to the application of the Suez Canal Convention during the British occupation of Egypt.

The second contains the reply made to this inquiry by the French Government, which M. Herbette informed you had been drawn up on agreement with that of Her Majesty.

Your Excellency will perceive by the inclosed copy of a despatch to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris* that this latter statement of M. Herbette was not quite correct.

The answer in question was mentioned to me by the French Ambassador here as having already been given by M. Flourens. I stated that the latter part of it was not intelligible to me, but that I had no ground for objecting to M. Flourens having made it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 107.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 364.)

Constantinople, November 22, 1887.

My Lord,

IN obedience to your Lordship's telegraphic instructions received on the morning of the 15th instant, I proceeded to the Sublime Porte on the morning of that day, and informed Grand Vizier, and subsequently Saïd Pasha (at his own house), that I was authorized by you to support the communication made to them on the previous Saturday by Count Montebello on the subject of the draft of a Convention for guaranteeing the free use of the Suez Canal at all times which had been agreed upon by the two Governments.

I also informed his Highness and his Excellency that my communication would be shortly followed by the transmission of a copy of this draft.

In accordance with this promise, I sent Mr. Kennedy this morning to Saïd Pasha

* No. 90.

with copies of all the three inclosures which accompanied your Lordship's instruction Nos. 259 and 266 of the 4th instant, which were brought to me this morning by Queen's Messenger Callander.

His Excellency was too unwell to see Mr. Kennedy, and I was also unable to leave the Embassy to-day, so I sent these three documents to the Sublime Porte, and they were at once placed in the hands of the Under-Secretary of State, with a communication to the effect that, as Count Montebello had invited the Porte's adhesion to this arrangement, I was authorized in supporting it to express the hope of Her Majesty's Government that the terms of the proposed Convention will meet with the approval of the Imperial Ottoman Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 108.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 3.)

E
(No. 423. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Vienna, November 30, 1887.*

THE French Ambassador called on me this afternoon, and told me that when he saw Count Kálnoky yesterday he pressed his Excellency to say whether the Austro-Hungarian Government would convey its acceptance to the Suez Canal Convention without waiting indefinitely for the formal acceptance on the part of the Porte, but that his Excellency did not say distinctly that it would do so. His Excellency had, however, expressed his hope that the Porte would abstain from any undue delay owing to knowledge of the fact that the Government was awaiting the Turkish acceptance in order to signify its own.

M. Decrais also said that Count Kálnoky had made no further reference to the necessity of some formal or collective act of acceptance on the part of the Powers, as reported in my despatch No. 420 of the 28th instant. But Count Kálnoky had told him that the Russian Government "was recalcitrant," and that it had notified that the Convention had been submitted to the Russian Minister of Marine in order that a Report should be drawn up on the subject. This, in Count Kálnoky's opinion, implied that some considerable delay might be expected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

No. 109.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 3.)

E
(No. 424. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Vienna, December 1, 1887.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 423 of yesterday, I observed to Count Kálnoky this morning that the French Ambassador had informed me that his Excellency had spoken to him on the subject of the Suez Canal Convention.

His Excellency replied that, to put it more correctly, M. Decrais had talked to him on the subject. The French Government was desirous, it appeared, to hurry on the acceptance on the part of the Porte, but it was fresh in the memory of the Turks that the French had been very recently loud in their asseverations of respect for the rights of Turkey when another arrangement had been under discussion, and that this pressure to ratify at once an arrangement in which Turkey had not been consulted came ill from such a quarter.

Count Kálnoky did not believe that the Turks would make much difficulty, and repeated that Austria-Hungary would make none; but his Excellency had implied that the energy of the French would find a more favourable field at St. Petersburgh, a quarter whence difficulties were far more likely to arise, as M. de Giers had stated that before anything could be done a technical Report must be obtained from the Minister of Marine on the whole question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

No. 110.

Sir W. Stuart to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 3.)

E
(No. 102.)

My Lord, *The Hague, December 2, 1887.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 55 of the 4th ultimo, and to my No. 97 of the 17th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a note which I have just received from M. de Karnebeek, stating that the Netherlands Government give their willing approval to the terms of the proposed Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

Inclosure in No. 110.

M. de Karnebeek to Sir W. Stuart.

M. le Ministre, *La Haye, le 2 Décembre, 1887.*

PAR votre office du 17 du mois précédent vous avez bien voulu, au nom du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique et d'accord avec celui de la République Française, inviter le Gouvernement du Roi à donner son approbation au projet de Convention sur lequel les Cabinets de Londres et de Paris sont tombés d'accord par rapport à la libre navigation du Canal de Suez, tout en me faisant connaître le sens et la portée que le Gouvernement de la Reine est disposé à accorder à cette Convention.

J'ai l'honneur, M. le Ministre, de vous prier de porter à la connaissance de votre Gouvernement que le Gouvernement du Roi approuve volontiers les termes de la Convention proposée.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) KARNEBEEK.

No. 111.

Sir R. Morier to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 388.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, November 25, 1887.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the note addressed to me by M. de Giers in reply to my communication to him of the 19th instant, a copy of which is likewise inclosed on the subject of the Suez Canal Convention. It is, as your Lordship will perceive, a mere acknowledgment of receipt.

I may mention that my French colleague, M. de Laboulaye, who returned from leave yesterday, has informed me that M. de Giers had told him that the matter had been placed in the hands of the Minister of Marine, Admiral Shestakow. Had it been left in those of M. de Giers, I am convinced from the few words which his Excellency let drop with regard to it, that he would have been content to follow suit, all the other Powers being agreed, but I think it possible that the Naval Department may raise technical objections and endeavour to display an officious activity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. B. D. MORIER.

November 30.

P.S.—M. de Giers told me to-day that no decision would, for the present, be taken by the Russian Government respecting the Suez Canal Convention.

They considered the preliminaries lay in the first instance with the Porte, whose decision they had no intention of prejudging. M. de Nelidoff had received instructions to express no opinion in one sense or the other, but to hold his tongue.

R. B. D. M.

Inclosure 1 in No. 111.

Sir R. Morier to M. de Giers.

M. le Ministre, *St. Petersburgh, November* 7 (19), 1887.

WITH reference to the verbal statement I had the honour to make to your Excellency on Wednesday last to the effect that I had been instructed by Her Majesty's Government to support the communication by the French Chargé d'Affaires respecting the draft of Suez Canal Convention agreed to by the British and French Governments, and to express the hope that the terms of the said Convention would meet with the approval of the Russian Government.

I have been instructed to communicate to your Excellency the copy of a despatch addressed by the Marquis of Salisbury to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris, giving an account of the discussions which have led to the settlement of this draft, and of the conditions under which Her Majesty's Government have expressed their willingness to agree to it.

I likewise have the honour to transmit copies of a correspondence relative to the construction to be placed on Article V of the Convention, from which it will be seen that the French Government and that of Her Majesty are agreed that the prohibition to disembark troops in the Canal and its ports of access contained in that Article cannot be interpreted as depriving unarmed invalid soldiers of access to the military hospitals of Suez and Port Saïd.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) R. B. D. MORIER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 111.

M. de Giers to Sir R. Morier.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *St. Pétersbourg, le* 10 (22) *Novembre*, 1887.

PAR sa note en date du 7 (19) courant, votre Excellence a bien voulu me transmettre copies des correspondances relatives au Projet de Convention arrêté par les Gouvernements de la Grande-Bretagne et de France au sujet du Canal de Suez.

Je me fais un devoir de vous informer que le Cabinet Impérial ne manquera pas de vouer à l'étude de ces correspondances, ainsi que du Projet de Convention qui m'a été remis par M. le Chargé d'Affaires de France, toute l'attention que l'importance de la présente question est de nature à comporter.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) GIERS.

No. 112.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 281.)
My Lord, *Rome, November* 26, 1887.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 324, transmitting copies of correspondence relative to the construction to be placed on Article V of the draft Convention for securing the free navigation of the Suez Canal, for communication to the Italian Government, I have now the honour to inclose translation of Signor Crispi's note acknowledging the receipt of the correspondence in question, and expressing his assent to the construction placed upon the Article above referred to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE.

Inclosure in No. 112.

Signor Crispi to Sir J. Savile.

(Translation.)
M. l'Ambassadeur, *Rome, November* 23, 1887.

YOUR Excellency, in accordance with instructions from your Government, was good enough to communicate to me, in your note of the 17th instant, a copy of a

despatch dated the 21st October, addressed to the British Minister at Paris, in which Lord Salisbury exposes the conduct and conclusion of the negotiations, which led to the draft of the Suez Canal Convention at present under the consideration of the various Cabinets.

I shall be obliged to your Excellency if you will be so good as to express my best thanks to his Lordship for so interesting a communication.

At the same time your Excellency communicated to me in the same note a short correspondence, containing a confirmation by the Cabinets of London and Paris, of the proper interpretation to be given to the word "troops," to be found in Article V of the draft Convention. The interpretation agreed to is such as to exclude the false supposition that the prohibition to disembark, which applies to troops in time of war, should deprive infirm and disarmed soldiers of the right of access to the military hospitals of Suez and Port Saïd.

With great pleasure I take note of this interpretation, which seems to me also to be a just and rational one.

Receive, &c.
(Signed) F. CRISPI.

No. 113.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 293.) *Foreign Office, December* 6, 1887.
Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 364 of the 22nd ultimo, informing me of the steps taken by you to support the communication made to the Porte by the French Ambassador on the subject of the Suez Canal, and to invite the adhesion of the Turkish Government to the draft Convention agreed upon between this country and France.

Your Excellency's proceedings in the matter are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 114.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 522. Confidential.) *Paris, December* 7, 1887.
My Lord,

M. FLOURENS informed me to-day confidentially, that the Grand Vizier's language showed that in consequence of Russian advice the Porte was inclined to raise difficulties about the Suez Canal Convention, proposing the insertion of a fresh clause relating to the period of occupation of Egypt by British troops, which was, as M. Flourens said, foreign to the question of the Suez Canal.

His Excellency regretted this delay, and trusted that Her Majesty's Government would press the Porte to lose no time in giving its assent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 115.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 137.) *Foreign Office, December* 8, 1887, 5·45 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

FRENCH Government say Porte are making difficulties about Suez Canal Convention, and propose insertion of fresh clause respecting period of British occupation of Egypt.

Urge Porte to give assent to Convention without introducing extraneous subjects.

No. 116.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 296. Ext. 137.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 8, 1887.

HER Majesty's Government have learnt from the Government of France that difficulties are being raised by the Porte with regard to their acceptance of the terms of the draft Convention respecting the Suez Canal agreed upon between this country and France.

It is understood that the Turkish Government propose the insertion of a fresh clause relating to the period of the British occupation of Egypt.

I have to-day requested your Excellency, by telegraph, to urge the Porte to give their assent to the proposed Convention without attempting the introduction of extraneous subjects.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 117.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 95. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 9, 1887, 11·17 P.M.

YOUR telegram No. 137 of yesterday.

I have no reason to believe or suppose the Porte still intends inserting the clause mentioned, and the French Ambassador, whom I have just seen, is of exactly the same opinion, though he thinks some idea of the kind existed some time ago. At that time it had been ascribed to the hopes raised by French suggestion, as reported by me in my telegram to your Lordship No. 89 of the 5th ultimo.

The language of Count Montebello is certainly correct now.

The Porte is very slow in this matter, and, in reality, cares little about this Convention.

I hear that there is some impatience at Vienna and Rome at this delay, and it might be of considerable advantage if other Ambassadors besides us two pressed the Porte to come to a decision.

I have spoken in this sense to the French Ambassador.

No. 118.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 10.)

E

(No. 373. Very Confidential. Ext. 95.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 9, 1887.

I HAVE seen Count Montebello this evening, and, having stated to his Excellency the purport of your instructions with reference to the Suez Canal Convention as conveyed to me by your telegram No. 137 of last night, I asked him whether the information given you by the French Government was derived from him.

He at once stated that this was by no means the case, and he confirmed my own impression that, at any rate at present, he was quite sure that the Sublime Porte had no longer the intention to introduce a clause of the kind mentioned to your Lordship.

Count Montebello said that there was a time when some such idea existed at the Sublime Porte, and I told him that I had heard of it at the time, as your Lordship will perhaps remember from the telegram addressed by me to you on the 5th ultimo, No. 89.

I even added, quite frankly, that it had been reported to me that such a suggestion had been thrown out to Turkey by France. This he denied, but it is possible that on observing that any such turn given to the present Convention would simply upset it, the Government of the Republic perceived the danger of such a course, for their Ambassador's attitude is perfectly correct on this point now, and he confines himself to saying that the question of our evacuation may be promoted by the acceptance of the present Convention by Turkey, but ought not to be mixed up with it.

The attitude of Russia continues to be very obscure as regards the Convention, and the Turks are by no means disposed to speak out their mind in a hurry.

The Cabinets of Rome and Vienna are, before giving their adhesion, waiting to hear what the Sublime Porte says; and after discussing the causes of the present delay in obtaining a reply from the Sublime Porte, we come to the conclusion that it would be siderable that the other Ambassadors should be instructed to press this Government to come to a decision besides us two.

I related to the French Ambassador the steps I had taken, under instructions from your Lordship, to urge Saïd Pasha to urge his Government to come to a favourable decision about the Convention, and I added that the Government of the Republic might accelerate such a solution by the exercise of its influence with the Cabinet of St. Petersburgh.

I had the honour to send your Lordship the substance of the present despatch this evening by telegraph.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 119.

*The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir J. Savile.**

(No. 109.)
(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, December 12, 1887.

SIR W. WHITE'S telegram No. 95, repeated to you.

Suggest to Government to which you are accredited that their Ambassador should press the Porte to accept the Convention without further delay.

No. 120.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir J. Savile.†

(No. 339. Ext. 109.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 12, 1887.

IT appears from the telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople No. 95 of the 9th instant, which has been repeated to you, that the Porte shows no signs of giving its adhesion to the terms of the Anglo-French Arrangement with regard to the Suez Canal; and his Excellency adds that it might be of advantage if the Representatives of the other Great Powers would press the Turkish Government to come to a decision.

Under these circumstances, I have to request that your Excellency will suggest to the Government to which you are accredited that their Ambassador at Constantinople should be instructed to press the Porte to give its assent to the Convention without further delay.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 121.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 12, 10 P.M.)

(No. 81.)
(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, December 12, 1887, 6·50 P.M.

SUEZ CANAL: Your telegram No. 107.

Instructions in sense indicated were sent to Baron Calice on the 9th. Italian Ambassador has already expressed similar desire, but is not sanguine as to speedy result at Constantinople.

Russian preparations. No intelligence of reassuring character has reached Foreign Office from St. Petersburgh.

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* Also to Mr. Phipps (No. 107).

† Also to Mr. Phipps (No. 213).

No. 122.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 12.)

(No. 438. Ext. 81.)
My Lord, *Vienna, December* 12, 1887.

ON receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 107, repeating to me Sir W. White's telegram No. 95, I called at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and ascertained that a telegraphic instruction was sent to Baron Calice on the 9th instant to urge the Porte to come to a decision as early as possible on the subject of the Suez Canal Convention.

In this instruction, which was read over to me, it was pointed out that the Imperial and Royal Government was desirous, out of a feeling of respect for the suzerainty of the Porte, that its adhesion to the Convention should precede that of the other Powers, and Count Kálnoky trusted that the execution of that desire would be rendered possible by the Porte not any longer delaying its decision.

I subsequently saw Count Nigra, who informed me that at M. Crispi's desire he had recently urged the Austrian Government to take a step of this nature, and I informed him that the instruction above referred to had been sent.

His Excellency did not appear very sanguine, from the information which he had received, of any speedy result being achieved at Constantinople, and expressed his fears that the Powers acting in accord would have much procrastination to contend against.

I conveyed the main portion of this information to your Lordship by telegraph, but did not, under the circumstances, consider it necessary to forward it to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, but I propose, however, to send his Excellency a copy of this despatch my messenger.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

No. 123.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 14, 10 A.M.)

(No. 83.)
(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, December* 14, 1887, 12·45 A.M.

YOUR telegram No. 107.

Count Kálnoky, who had learnt of the Porte's desire to raise the question of evacuation in connection with the Convention, telegraphed again on Sunday to Baron Calice to inform Sultan that such a course would be most unwise, adding that, if Porte insists on refusal to take desired initiative, Austria will no longer delay acceptance. According to to-day's information, Porte is acting under Russian instigation.

(Sent to Constantinople.)

No. 124.

Mr. Phipps to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 14.)

(No. 422. Ext. 83.)
My Lord, *Vienna, December* 13, 1887.

I STATED to the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon that your Lordship had desired me to suggest that it would be useful if instructions were sent to the Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople to urge the Porte to accept the Suez Canal Convention without delay, but that I had already acquainted you with the step which his Excellency had taken in that sense on the 9th instant.

Count Kálnoky said that information had reached him from more than one source of the Porte's desire to raise the question of the evacuation of Egypt in connection with the Convention, and that he had consequently a couple of days ago instructed Baron Calice to point out to the Sultan that such a course would be most unwise, as there was, in his opinion, no connection between the two subjects; he had instructed the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to add that if the Porte persisted in its refusal to take the initiative in such acceptance, which it was desirable that it should in its own

interests assume, Austria-Hungary would no longer delay her formal acceptance of the Convention.

His Excellency stated to me that, according to the accounts which he had received, Turkey is acting in this matter at the instigation of Russia.

I communicated the above information to your Lordship by telegraph, and also to Sir W. White.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. H. PHIPPS.

No. 125.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 14, 1 P.M.)

(No. 55.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, December* 14, 1887, 11·15 A.M.

YOUR telegram No. 109 of the 12th instant communicated to Signor Crispi.

Italian Ambassador at Constantinople instructed to act in concert with his colleagues of Austria and England, with whom in Suez Canal question Italy has adopted identic attitude.

No. 126.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 14.)

(No. 289. Ext. 55.)
My Lord, *Rome, December* 14, 1887.

I HAVE reported to your Lordship this day, by telegraph, that I communicated your Lordship's telegram No. 109 of the 12th to his Excellency Signor Crispi.

I have now the honour to inform your Lordship that the Italian Government have instructed their Representative at Constantinople to act in concert with the English and Austrian Ambassadors at that place on the Suez Canal question, with respect to which Italy has adopted an attitude identic with that of the two latter Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE.

No. 127.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 14, 3 P.M.)

(No. 96.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 14, 1887, 1·40 P.M.

MY telegram No. 95 of 9th instant.

I hear that we may expect very shortly Porte's reply concerning the Suez Canal Convention, asking for three minor amendments, but leaving out evacuation question.

No. 128.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 115.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 16, 1887.

SUEZ CANAL Convention.

Please refer to telegram sent to Her Majesty's Representatives at Vienna and Rome on 12th instant.

If your French colleague wishes you to join in making similar representation to German Government, you may do so.

No. 129.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 549. Ext. 115.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, December 16, 1887.

ON the 12th instant I requested Her Majesty's Representatives at Vienna and Rome, by telegraph, to suggest to the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Governments that their Ambassadors at Constantinople should be instructed to press the Porte to give its assent to the proposed Suez Canal Convention without further delay.

A copy of this telegram will have reached your Excellency by messenger.

In the event of your French colleague wishing you to join in making a similar representation to the German Government, your Excellency is authorized to do so.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 130.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 17, 1·50 P.M.)

(No. 56.)
(Telegraphic.)

Rome, December 17, 1887, 11·45 A.M.

YOUR telegram No. 109 of 12th instant.

Instructions sent to Italian Ambassador at Constantinople to join Baron Calice in the step he is taking with regard to Suez Canal Convention.

No. 131.

Sir J. Savile to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 17.)

(No. 293. Ext. 56.)
My Lord,

Rome, December 17, 1887.

IN reply to your Lordship's telegram No. 109 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to report that the Italian Government have instructed Baron Blanc to co-operate with his Austrian colleague in the action which the latter is taking with reference to the Suez Canal Convention.

I have reported the above to your Lordship by telegraph.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. SAVILE.

No. 132.

Sir R. Morier to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 17, 10 P.M.)

(No. 80.)
(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburgh, December 17, 1887, 6·38 P.M.

MR. PHIPPS' No. 83.

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs reiterates in the strongest form assurances given in my telegram No. 79, and tells me M. de Nélidoff had informed Porte that Russia would express no opinion until the Porte and all the other Powers had expressed theirs.

No. 133.

Sir R. Morier to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 17.)

(No. 412. Ext. 80.)
My Lord,

St. Petersburgh, December 17, 1887.

WHEN I saw M. de Giers to-day I mentioned that I had heard a rumour that the Porte was making difficulties about the Suez Canal Convention, and that in doing so it was supported by the action of M. de Nélidoff. I felt convinced this was not true, as it was directly contrary to the assurance he had lately given me.

His Excellency said with some irritation that he had seen the report in a lithographed "correspondence" from Pesth, to which most of the calumnies respecting Russia could be traced. It was absolutely false. M. de Nélidoff had received the instructions reported to your Lordship in the postscript of my despatch No. 388 of the 25th ultimo. He himself had received, in reply, a despatch from Constantinople saying that the Porte had been informed that the Russian Government had no intention of giving any opinion on the subject of the Convention until not only Turkey but all the Powers had expressed theirs.

M. de Giers added that he had received a report from the Ministry of Marine containing technical objections to the Convention, but that he had not read it carefully, and had placed it with the other documents accompanying it to bide their time.

I had the honour to report the substance of the above in my telegram No. 80 of this day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. B. D. MORIER.

No. 134.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 19.)

E
(No. 380. Very Confidential.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, December 13, 1887.

SINCE addressing to your Lordship my despatch No. 373, Confidential, of the 9th instant, on the subject of the Suez Canal Convention, I have learnt that, under instructions from their Governments, Baron Calice has been pressing the Sublime Porte to come to a decision, and that Baron Blanc has spoken in the same sense.

I have likewise been informed very confidentially that the Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburgh has telegraphed home that the Russian Government would not be sorry to see the point of our evacuation being raised at this moment, but that they wish the Porte to make haste with its answer.

If this is true, and I believe it to be so, it accounts for the report which had reached your Lordship through France.

The three amendments which, according to my information, are most likely to be proposed in our Convention by the Porte are the following:—

An Ottoman or Egyptian Delegate to preside at the meetings held by the Consuls with regard to the Canal.

The omission of the words "par leurs propres forces" in Article X.

The insertion of a new stipulation as regards the non-construction of fortifications in proximity to the Canal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 135.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 486.)
My Lord,

Berlin, December 17, 1887.

I HAD the honour last night to receive your Lordship's telegram No. 115 of yesterday, saying that if the French Ambassador wished me to join in suggesting to the German Government that their Ambassador at Constantinople should press the Porte to accept the Suez Canal Convention without further delay, I might do so.

The Ambassador wrote to me this morning on the subject, and I have in consequence seen him this afternoon. He said that he had been informed by his Government that I was authorized to join him in making the suggestion to the German Government, but he asked me if I would mind making it first, as he thought that Count Bismarck would be much more likely to accede to the suggestion, if it came primarily from me and was supported by him, than if he proposed it in the first instance. I replied that I had no objection to this arrangement, but that Count Bismarck was away from Berlin to-day, and that I thought it would be better for me to speak to him than to write.

It was, therefore, arranged that I should make the suggestion to Count Bismarck as soon as I can see him, and to let my French colleague know as soon as I have done so.

I trust that, in acceding to his Excellency's wish that I should speak first to Count Bismarck, I acted as your Lordship would have desired.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 136.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 487. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, December* 19, 1887.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 486, of the 17th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I yesterday suggested to Count Bismarck that he should send instructions to the German Ambassador at Constantinople to press the Porte to accept the Draft Convention relating to the Suez Canal without further delay, and I mentioned that the French Ambassador here would prefer a similar request to him.

Count Bismarck replied that he had heard confidentially from Constantinople that the Porte was withholding its answer, being under the impression that its dilatoriness in this matter would not be disagreeable to Her Majesty's Government. It had the idea that the Draft Convention had been agreed to by Her Majesty's Government in consequence of pressure put upon them by France, and that they would not be sorry if it came to nothing through the agency of another Power. Count Bismarck observed to me that whereas the French Ambassador had pressed him for an answer at every interview, I had said nothing to him about it since the Draft Convention had been first submitted, and he gave me to understand that he had not felt sure that the view of the Porte might not have something in it.

I replied that I could assure him that this was not the case; we had come to an understanding with France which we desired to carry through loyally, and that there could be no doubt that your Lordship wished him to consent to the suggestion which I had been instructed to make. If I had not further spoken to him on the subject of accepting the Convention, it was merely because he had told me at once that he should not send an answer before the Austrian and Italian Governments had sent theirs.

Count Bismarck said that that being the case, he would submit the request to Prince Bismarck, and would inform me of the result.

I have told the French Ambassador that Count Bismarck received my request *ad referendum*.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 137.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 21, 8·30 A.M.)

(No. 100.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 21, 1887, 12·50 A.M.

YOUR Lordship's telegram No. 137 of the 8th instant: Suez Canal Convention.

At last I think I have got at the truth of the statement made to your Lordship. When the Convention had been first examined at the Porte the Grand Vizier appears to have stated to the French Ambassador that he was inclined to couple the Turkish assent to it with a condition that it should not come into force until the evacuation question was settled. His Highness thinks that this suggestion was not disagreeable to Count de Montebello when first mentioned by him, and he adds that he is at a loss to understand why Her Majesty's Government should have any objection to its adoption; in fact, he still adheres to this idea, and this was the language he held to me this afternoon when I urged him strongly to accept the Convention without complicating matters by introducing such a subject, which his Highness, however, would not admit to be an extraneous one.

I was quite surprised to find him so decided, as he never raised this question

to me previously. I happen to know, confidentially, that the Minister for Foreign Affairs is of quite a different opinion, and opposed to any such reservation, and from my previous conversation with his Excellency I was quite unprepared to find Grand Vizier holding views so utterly new to me.

Baron Calice spoke to his Highness, under instructions from Count Kálnoky, quite as strongly as I have done, and so has Italian Ambassador.

No. 138.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 21.)

(No. 386. Ext. 100.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 21, 1887.

THE Sublime Porte is taking an immense time before making up its mind as regards the Suez Canal Convention, and there is one point in connection with this subject which I have been trying for some time to discover, and on which I think I have at length elicited the truth.

In pressing the Grand Vizier to accept this Convention without further delay, I ascertained with much difficulty from his Highness that he really means to insist on the insertion of a clause in this Agreement, by which the Convention cannot come into force until the question of our evacuation shall be finally settled between Turkey and ourselves.

In fact, he wishes to stipulate for the Ottoman Government a reservation similar to the one inserted by your Lordship in the Agreement in the terms of Sir Julian Pauncefote's statement to the Paris Commission in 1885.

This intention Kiamil Pasha says he mentioned to the French Ambassador when this Convention was first spoken of between them, and his Highness carried off the impression that the suggestion was not disagreeable to Count Montebello, to which he now adds that he is at a loss to understand why Her Majesty's Government should entertain any objection to its adoption.

I was very much surprised when I saw his Highness yesterday afternoon to hear him adhere to a scheme which he had not mentioned to me before, and which some of my colleagues and other trustworthy persons had, it is true, mentioned to me some weeks ago, but stating at the same time that they considered it as having been dropped.

I spoke very decidedly about this to the Grand Vizier, and I trust I left no doubt on his mind that your Lordship objected to the introduction of any extraneous question of this kind in the Agreement concerning the Suez Canal alone.

His Highness would not admit that the word "extraneous" could properly apply to his proposal, on which he insists with very surprising perseverance.

I have ascertained quite confidentially that Saïd Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and several other members of the Government are of a different opinion, and quite opposed to the introduction of such a reservation.

The Austrian Ambassador has spoken against it to the Grand Vizier trying to dissuade him from its adoption, and so has Baron Blanc, and both have urged the Sublime Porte, under instructions from their respective Governments, to come to a speedy decision on the Suez Canal Convention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 139.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 21, 3·30 P.M.)

(No. 101.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 21, 1887, 2·10 P.M.

MY telegram to your Lordship No. 100 of yesterday.

Count de Montebello assures me most positively that he has objected to the Grand Vizier's suggestion of the evacuation clause when the subject was mentioned to his Excellency by his Highness.

No. 140.

(Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 21, 5·15 P.M.)

(No. 65.)
(Telegraphic.)

Berlin, December 21, 1887, 5·12 P.M.

PRINCE BISMARCK accedes to your Lordship's request. German Ambassador has been instructed to press Porte not to postpone its adhesion to Convention any longer.

No. 141.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 21.)

(No. 489. Ext. 65.)

Berlin, December 21, 1887.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 115, of the 16th instant, I had the honour to report to your Lordship this day, by telegraph, that Prince Bismarck acceded to the suggestion which I made in similar terms to that which Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Vienna and Rome were instructed to make, namely, that the Porte should be pressed to accept the Suez Canal Convention without further delay, and instructions have been sent to the German Ambassador at Constantinople to urge the Porte no longer to postpone its adhesion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 142.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 21, 10·30 P.M.)

(No. 37.)
(Telegraphic.)

Paris, December 21, 1887, 5·47 P.M.

MY despatch No. 522.

French Minister for Foreign Affairs has just received a telegram from Count de Montebello expressing the greatest annoyance at false statement of Grand Vizier to Sir W. White as to French Ambassador's having recommended Additional Article respecting evacuation in the Suez Canal Convention.

Count de Montebello says that his language was exact contrary, and he regrets that Sir W. White did not go to him at once for explanations before informing Her Majesty's Government.

No. 143.

Mr. Egerton to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received by telegraph, December 21.)

(No. 551. Ext. 37.)

Paris, December 21, 1887.

My Lord,

WITH reference to despatch No. 522, M. Flourens read to me to-day a telegram just received from Count de Montebello, expressing his extreme annoyance at the Grand Vizier having told Sir W. White that he had advised the Porte to insert a fresh Article in the Suez Canal Convention respecting the evacuation of Egypt by British troops; he had, on the contrary, spoken against such addition, and he regretted Sir W. White not having given him an opportunity of denying this false statement before telegraphing the Grand Vizier's language to Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWIN H. EGERTON.

No. 143*.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 554.)

Foreign Office, December 22, 1887.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 486 of the 17th instant, informing me that you had assented to the request of the French Ambassador, that you should first suggest to the German Government that their Ambassador at Constantinople should be instructed to press the Porte to accept the Suez Canal Convention without further delay, and that he should subsequently support your communication.

Your Excellency's action in the matter is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 144.

Sir E. Malet to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 26.)

(No. 492. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Berlin, December* 24, 1887.

AS I had the honour to report in my telegram No. 65 of the 21st instant, Count Bismarck sent me word on that day that Prince Bismarck had authorized instructions being sent to the German Ambassador at Constantinople to press the Porte to accept the draft Convention regarding the Suez Canal without further delay.

Count Bismarck came to see me on the following day, and said that his father had willingly given his consent, as I had assured him that there was no doubt that your Lordship desired it.

His Excellency added that he had heard from Constantinople that the Porte would probably request that the President of the Council which would sit under Article VIII should be an Ottoman official. It was not clear how this could be arranged, as the Porte could not have a Consul-General in Egypt. It might become a matter for your Lordship's consideration, and the German Government would adhere to the decision of Her Majesty's Government with regard to any requests which the Porte might make.

Your Lordship will remember that M. Herbette, the French Ambassador, asked me to speak before he did to Count Bismarck on the subject of sending instructions to the German Ambassador, on the ground that I was more likely to be listened to than he was.

It was a somewhat significant corroboration of this view that Count Bismarck, when he spoke to me, told me that he had sent no message to M. Herbette in answer to the request, and that he did not propose to say anything about it to him unless further questioned; but he added, in reply to a question from me, that he had no objection to my telling him that instructions had been sent. It would appear from this that Count Bismarck is, for the present, in dealing with the French Representative, omitting the little courtesies which are the small change of friendly relations between Governments.

As soon as Count Bismarck left me, I called upon M. Herbette, and told his Excellency that instructions had been sent to Constantinople in the sense we had requested.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 145.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir E. Malet.

(No. 555.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 26, 1887.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 487 of the 19th instant, stating that you have suggested to Count Bismarck that instructions should be sent to the German Ambassador at Constantinople to press the Porte to accept the draft Convention with regard to the Suez Canal; and, in reply, I have to inform you that the language used by you to Count Bismarck, as reported in that despatch, is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

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